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VANCOUVER

THE ASIANADIAN

AN ASIAN CANADIAN MAGAZINE

dear readers

No amount of Globe and Mail accolades for us can stop rising printing and distribution costs!

Quote of the day

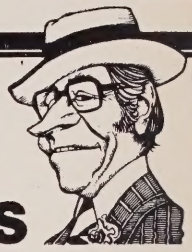
"If the Vietnamese survived monsoons, napalm bombs and pirates in the South China Sea, they will be just fine this winter in Saskatoon . . . ." — **Cheuk Kwan**, editor of Asianadian magazine. Page 8.

They have escalated to a point where we may not be able to continue:

To bring you incisive articles on ASIAN CANADIAN affairs & issues,

To bring you a unique ASIAN perspective to Canadian culture,

To be a forum for ASIAN artists & writers in Canada.



DICK BEDDOES

Dubious Award starts season

DECEMBER IS the time for summing up, for inventory, recapitulation and review. Memory is frisked, votes cast and counted, titles conferred — man-of-the-year, highlight-of-the-year, train-wreck-of-the-year, cop-of-the-year, flop-of-the-year, and so yawn.

At hand is the first selection received for 1979, the Dubious Award, presented by the lively Asianadian, an Asian Canadian magazine published in Toronto.

Editor Cheuk C. Kwan writes, "Our Dubious Award is given to 'outstanding' stereotyping and distortions on Asians by individuals and the mass media. Past receipients include the Toronto Star, Calgary Herald and the Takee-Outee Restaurant in Hamilton.

"Now our Dubious Award goes to Gordon Sinclair, Toronto's boat people cr[illegible]."

Sinc's citation reads, in part, "Sinclair decide[illegible]

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All donations of $50. or more will be acknowledged in the MASTHEAD.

The Asianadian

Teaching ba[illegible] ing for dancers Augustyn, even dents' modesty scenes rather di[illegible]

[illegible] and did[illegible] before some[illegible] paying him —

Classified adverti[illegible]

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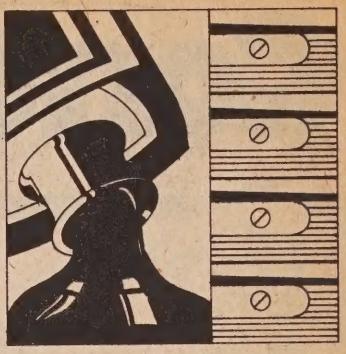
Editorial



Asian-Canadian consciousness took root in the early 1970's in Vancouver. Members of the Chinese and Japanese minorities became politically aware that they shared a common psychological and historical experience, both past and present. Asian-Canadian writing is the expression of that awareness.

Inspired by the Asian-American movement of the late 1960's, Chinese and Japanese Canadians came together in 1972 to present the "Asian-Canadian Experience" on the campus of the University of British Columbia. The Event was highlighted by Chinese and Japanese Canadian photo exhibits, cultural performances, and included the first reading of Asian Canadian poetry.

Since then, writing has grown with other developments in the community. In 1974, the Chinese-Canadian *Gum San Po* was published. This was followed by two Chinese-Canadian Youth Conferences. The 1975 "Identity and Awareness" sessions set the stage for much youthful participation in Vancouver's Chinatown, especially around the then fledging Chinese Cultural Center.

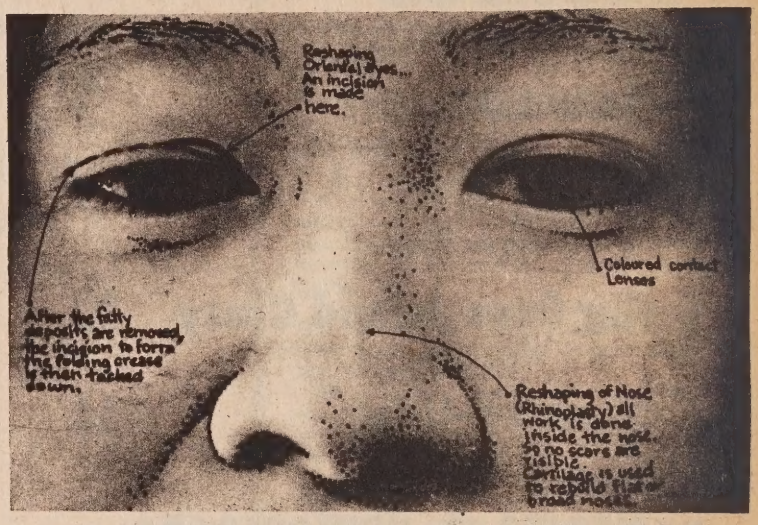
In 1976, "Between Us--Chinese" exclaimed the gap between native born and immigrant Chinese-Canadians. And out of this came Pender Guy, the radio programme which has produced many creative pieces of comedy and drama.

In 1977, the Japanese Canadians celebrated their centennial. The first Powell Street Festival marked the occasion, and was accompanied by the historical photo exhibition and book *Dream of Riches*, and the first "Banana Conference ".

The shared characteristic of this collection of writing is that all the writers have been active in the festivals, conferences, protests, and social services of Asian-Canadian in Vancouver. These pieces, then, are distilled from the re-discovery and participation in Asian-Canadian communities.

Writing, perhaps, is the most forward-looking aspect of visions for Asian-Canada. Currently, the Chinese and Japanese Canadians of Vancouver have been able to define their communities culturally and politically, in terms of organizations, protests and festivals.

But there is a need to articulate the human contexts that exist at the base of all Asian-Canadian activity. It is the frustration and the love, the hatreds and the humour of the emotional and personal commitments that truly define our community and sensibility.


Reshaping Oriental Eyes... An incision is made here.
Colored contact Lenses
After the fatty deposits are removed, the incision is formed, folding creases is then tacked down.
Reshaping of Nose (Rhinoplasty) all work is done inside the nose. So no scars are visible. Cartilage is used to rebuild flat or broad nose.

IDENTITY AWARENESS

The physical presence of Asian-Canada is undeniable, as is the history of its survivsl. But exactly *how* did it/we/our first/second/third generations survive? We can guess with courage and care, with endurance and irony. And these human connections are the internal threads of the community, tying all the experiences, the new generations to the old, the newly-arrived to the long-established. It is these vital definitions that must emerge in creative writing to give future a clear sense of our emotional community.

In 1980, the Powell Street Review and the Chinese Canadian Writers Workshop published *Inalienable Rice*, a collection of prose and poetry documenting Asian-Canadian histories and communities. Since then, those involved have formed the "Asian-Canadian Writers' Workshop". This group meets regularly to constructively criticize and help inspire each other in writing. This edition of *Asianadian* is the fruit of those efforts. We hope that other Asian Canadian writers across Canada are also getting together.

Sean Gunn
Paul Yee

sweatshop

Sharon Lee

Her back ached. What time is it? One o'clock... one thirty? She was unsure of her eyes. They burned and watered, blurring her vision. Should she stop? Are the other women still here?

No, it'd be better to just keep going-relentlessly. What other way was there? She continued to grind on and on. After all, bringing the machines to a standstill would also bring herself to a standstill. For wasn't she sewn to that machine for all time eternal? She was attached to it like the large spools of deep red thread suspended over her bent head. She could say, "See, daughter, this long thin silver needle is my only reason for being. And look, son, that long trail of interlocking thread - that's my own train of thought. Its machine whirl is my only voice. But no one hears me."

A wry little smile crossed her face. She thought to herself, "Actually this machine has worth. When this machine breaks down, someone will come to repair it. Someone will generously oil its gears and gently coax back its purr. If I break down, then there would be a different approach. There will always be another source waiting to pour life energy into this machine. There will always be more women."

A dry, thick laugh suddenly cracked in her throat. "But then my daughter does not look. She can't see past the black make-up pasted on her small eyes. And my son can't see past the prison bars in his dreams."

Nearby, at another sewing machine, Ah Yee heard something guttural which made her raise her head to look. She saw this woman with the laughter dissolving from her long thin face. Ahh, a joke remembered, no doubt, she thought. She thought to turn to the clock on the far wall, too. One-thirty. Soon.

"Why Auntie Cheung, what makes you smile like that?" Immediately, she cursed herself for her stupid question. Hah. This is not tea time gossip. This is work from morning to following morning in a dingy sewing factory. Not a laughing matter, especially for women like Mrs. Cheung.

Auntie Cheung raised her head slowly, wincing at the strain on cramped, tired muscles. She glanced at the rotund face throwing a small grin at her. Ah Yee was a simple-headed village type - kind and talkative. And Auntie Cheung appreciated her concern. It was good to have at least one friend in the sewing factory. Someone who is willing to guard her machine and work with gusto when she had to use the toilet.

"Nothing really. I've forgotten it anyways."

"Oh. Well, I thought maybe you were thinking again of those young fools we met the other day.

Her face was barren and gray against the fluorescent light.

The ones pounding the pavement with the pamphlets on "supporting a strike" or something like that."

Auntie Cheung was glad to talk. "Oh yes. Now what was that term they used - 'sweatshop?' Young idiots! With their slang and slogans."

Ah Yee assumed rather vacant eyes. "It doesn't mean anything to me."

"I think it means that they were disturbed over the horribly long and hard work that we must endure in this sewing factory for little pay," Auntie Cheung pulled a sardonic smirk, "under atrocious working conditions."

At that, both of them broke out into a short laugh. Some of the women glanced at them and their abrupt, loud jocularity. But, under the circumstances, the idea was extremely funny.

Ah Yee began again. "I don't know what is wrong with these young folks. They're all educated and speak good English. Yet they still don't understand the simplest things. Even this stupid old woman knows that each zipper sewn incorrectly earns me ten cents. If I work quietly and steadily, I can manage twenty-five to thirty zippers in an hour and earn two dollars and fifty cents. It's all very simple. I work. I get paid. I don't work; no pay."

Mrs. Cheung nodded. "What has all that reading done for them except make them unsettled with their lot? They're like forlorn outcasts on the outside. At least, I know enough to count my pennies earned inside."

And Ah Yee continued, "And seven hours times two dollars and fifty cents makes seventeen dollars and fifty cents. Ten hours times two dollars and fifty cents equals twenty-five dollars. But don't get cheated in the count. Thirteen hours times two dollars and fifty cents equal...provided of course, that one managed to maintain twenty-five pieces an hour."

The sewing machines whirled on, fluttering along the minutes of the night. Whirl! Whirl! Down one side of the zipper - five cents. Whirl! Up the other side - ten cents. They raced along, flog-

ging their fine threads behind them.

The heavy order came in early that afternoon and the work overflowed late into the night. There were rumours that another rush order was due next morning. Now it was approaching two o'clock in the morning and the machines were still rasping out their songs. The frothing and grinding vibrated up to each woman's brain and poured a tingling ache down their concave backbones.

Actually most of the sewing machine operators had gone home. They dwindled away according to a traditional social order. Usually, the ones who only worked out of boredom or greed were the first to leave. Then, there were the ones with husbands and families waiting at home, or the ones with rides waiting outside. They left with their shopping bags and polite phrases like "Buy more for your dinner," or "My, my, you're so lucky to have such a good son to drive you home." Until only the most pathetic on the sewing factory's social scale were left. These were either the poorest women or the newest immigrants or the women who didn't have husbands and families to go home to. Not because they didn't have husbands or families. More likely because the husbands and families weren't home. And these were probably in their own private little worlds in front of a mah jong table or wandering down Chinatown streets.

At two o'clock Ah Yee finally looked up with enthusiasm. She was going home. She was lucky because her husband was a cabby who usually worked late. She would have a comfortable taxi ride home even at this late hour with her husband, quietly discussing both their earnings for that evening. Her children had all grown up - all with hopeful positions in life although as yet unmarried. They didn't need her at home though her return would be warm and welcome.

As she packed up her things, she noticed, "Aiyah, Auntie Cheung, you're not bedding down on the big cutting table for the night? You surely won't be warm enough. They shut off the heat soon."

"Yes, I know, I am so stupid, not bringing an extra coat. I should know to prepare myself for the worse. These heavy orders come in too suddenly. But I'll do alright. I can find a few remnants of material here and there and make a pillow."

"Take my sweater for extra warmth."

"No, no, I couldn't take your nice sweater. I'll be fine."

"Tsh. What is this nice sweater business? Here, you take it."

"No. You'll need it for the trip home. It's still unsettled, especially at this late..."

"The cab's been thoroughly heated all night. I'll slip in really fast."

But they continued to fumble about. The sweater was shoved back and forth. Finally, Mrs. Cheung conceded to it. She was shame-faced, but Ah Yee, full of good intentions and concern, slightly missed it.

"Oh, this is embarassing. I really can't face you."

"Don't talk like that."

"You've such a good, kind heart."

"Hech!"

"I'm so stupid."

"I'll not listen to you."

"This is really my fault."

"Cock! Do you want to catch trouble with me? Be quiet."

Auntie Cheung still hung her head in apology. Ah Yee continued, "Here, I'll help you bed down on this table. Let's clear some of this clutter away. Oh yes, I just remembered. There is some leftover tea in my thermos. Give me yours. I'll pour it in. It'll only be thrown out anyway. And see, it's still quite warm."

The other woman was heavily fatigued. She climbed up onto the big cutting table and rested on her knees, with head still bowed, seeing to be kneeling in front of some threatening master. Then she gathered some clothes and scraps around her with somewhat slow, submissive motions. She lay down and became very still. Her face was barren and gray against the fluorescent lights.

When Ah Yee finished her little task, she hesitated a long moment, looking at the silent face. But the face did not respond. The eyes just kept staring up at the empty ceiling. Ah Yee picked up her bag. She looked again. Uncertain, she haltingly spoke, "Auntie Cheung, perhaps if you want, I can ask my husband to drive you home. It will only be this once. I'm sure he won't mind."

"Ah Yee, don't trouble yourself. I must stay here tonight or I will never make it back early enough to get a good machine. And you yourself know what a fight it is to position oneself on a good machine with enough pieces to last a full day, It's too hard for me with all those women fighting and grabbing in the morning, unless I am here early enough tomorrow. No, I must stay. I'm fine."

Her voice trailed away and she closed her eyes. Her head fell to one side. Ah Yee softly treaded to the door. She turned to take one last look at the stretched out figure, but with Auntie Cheung's head turned away she could only detect sharp white cheekbones against dark hair.

AKEMI

Rick Shiomi

"I am trying to change and you want to become more traditional."

The early morning was fantasy time for Ron. Alone in bed he could indulge his urges and slip away into sleep again. He glanced at the familiar gray skies on the window and rolled on his back. He closed his eyes to shut out thoughts of the coming day and slid his hands latchlike inside his thighs. In the darkness he conjured up glossy spreads of lips and legs of women seen at work, in the streets, in magazines. He fondled the ones fancied at the moment, but their parts blurred into flesh rubbing his own. His limbs grew rigid beneath the shaking covers waiting for the women to release them. The wave surged through him, the blankets died, and he coasted off into sleep.

Hours later he threw back the covers and stepped over to the closet. He stood five foot six without a pound to spare. Pausing in the mirror, he remembered the crazy woman from Frisco who had called him cute in his Asian way, and then apologized for the typecasting. He had chucked at the time, half flattered amd half understanding her perspective. But the news of his image appeal, a quality he had always envied in his *hakujin* friends, left him uneasy. He had unconsciously begun to suspect her motives in seeking their short term affair. She said she had been attracted to his youthfulness, yet at thirty he was eight years older than her. The layers of irony in their relationship reflected those of his other affairs. It was his sense of irony that made him cautious of judging people and experiences in absolute terms. Then he shook his head and rummaged through a pile of clothes. Pulling on some jeans and a wrinkled denim shirt, he started thinking of his schedule for the day.

He strode by the bathroom telling himself the clean-up could wait and stepped on through the living-room toward the front door and the mail. The eager shuffling of letters and bills had become a mid-morning ritual. A letter from Japan lit up a smile.

Tossing the rest onto the cluttered shelf, he retraced his steps to the bathroom and a long awaited movement. Once seated, he scanned the one page note from Kishi-san, a friend from his travels in Japan. In English oddly good, Kishi-san asked him to play host to a lady friend visiting Vancouver. It sounded fair enough with her staying at the YWCA : having to share with friends of friends could sometimes prove awkward. He read the lines again and wondered whether Kishi-san had gotten someone to write the English. Flushing the toilet, he began thinking about this lady friend.

He washed quickly but lingered in the mirror inspecting the thin spots of his hair. Then he swept up the note and headed for the living room. He sat down at the low table and made a space for the paper amid a scatter of notebooks. Thoughts of the mystery woman triggered a video tape replay of the previous eight months. Vancouver was only to have been a stopover on his way back to Japan. His first trip had been a two month exploratory tour and the second was to have been a three year commitment to learning Japanese and some of the finer arts. But this application for a work visa had been turned down, and he had gotten caught up in a world of Sixty's counter culture turned Seventy's community consciousness. In short order he had found a job teaching English at night school, more friends and a comfortable flat in an old white house on Cordova Street. The house was across from old Powell Grounds, in the heart of the Japanese section. There wasn't much remaining beyond a a handful of seniors in rooming houses, a few restaurants and the Buddhist Church, but he felt an intuitive attachment to this place. And after travelling off and on for the past two years in search of the unusual, he almost relished the comforts of the familiar.

But the eight months had been difficult in other ways. Sorting out relations with *hakujin* women had been no easier with those in Japan. He laughed remembering how he used to think that simply being able to communicate in English would solve all his problems once he was back in Vancouver. He was beginning to realize that it was his sense of transience, however philosophically phrased, which sooner or later created tension in his relationships. All his romantic dives into swan lakes had ended in variations on the theme of separate ways, with some of the partings less elegant than others. He suffered from mental constipation, afraid to get more involved yet unable to stay away. He fingered the paper immediately and pondered the possibilities of the coming encounter.

Moving to the middle of the room, he slowly bent over to touch the floor. He listened to the stretching of his muscles and wondered what she would be like. He began the slow shift from cloud hands to monkey beats a retreat, his whole body floating through the dance. Then he dropped his hands; his head was too noisy for tai chi. A quick glance at the drooping plants made him consider watering them, but the incessant ticking inside his head demanded his attention.

Rick Shiomi *is a Sansei from Toronto who is currently studying* taiko *and writing in San Francisco. He has co-cordinated the annual Powell Street Festival in Vancouver.*

"Let her be attractive, and please Lord, she's gotta speak English!"

He recognized the signs of hunger and wandered back to the kitchen. Soon memories of Japan eased into his thoughts. He paused to decide upon some *'ocha zuke* and promptly returned to his memories. His odyssey to Japan had been like diving for pearls, the total immersion among Japanese people had at first inverted all his sensibilities. But his fear of losing his identity in a yellow sea had dissolved and he felt a new security in being able to stand in a crowd unmarked by his color. At other levels it hadn't been as easy. Opening his mouth had created problems because he couldn't speak Japanese, but that had been expected and the subterranean ties had been a revelation.

Then the frustrating walls and guilt-edged cliffs of his affairs with Japanese women filled the screen. Miho came back to him in flashes, the instant surge of his attraction, her movie queen smile and delicate steps, then his surprise at her girdle and tummy. Junko came forward reminding him of his mother's solid warmth. She had lured him in predictable ways to ice cream parlours, love hotels, and farewell at the station. He had watched her drift away as the train pulled him out of reach and wondered at her composure. He had passed through so many women but the mystery of those affairs remained unsolved. Without words they had leaped directly into the fire; where words had fit, they had deceived like platform shoes and padded shoulders. All the goodwill, gestured innuendoes and furtive, pillowing scenes had been stimulating but not very fulfilling. Then his tea, cup, and hands were cold, and he realized there were lessons to plan and dittos to run off.

His expectations ran high for a while but faded with the passing days. Then he received a call from her.

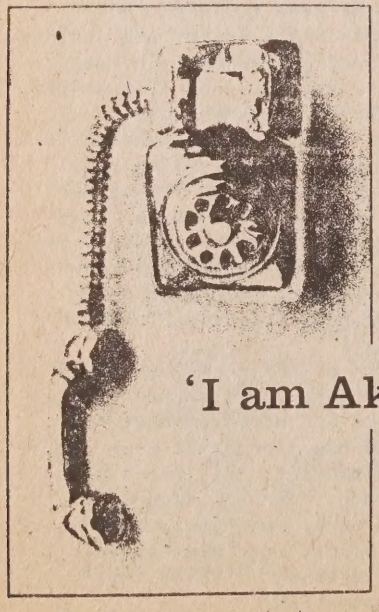
"Ahh, may I speak to Ron Tanaka?" the voice trembled.

"Oh, you must be Akemi," he blurted out. "I'm Ron."

"Are you Ron Tanaka?"

"Yes...I...am...Ron...Tanaka," he slowed down grinning at his own eagerness.

For a moment her voice dropped its uncertainty as she rolled out some obviously prepared lines,



'I am Akemi Ito'

"I am Akemi Ito. I am a friend of Kishi-san. Did you receive his letter?"

"Yes, I would like to see you. Where are you now?"

By the end of their jumbled conversation he was optimistic.

Later that afternoon he found himself pacing the YWCA lobby, wired with anticipation. He was ready for anything except the woman who turned away from the front desk and smiled at him. As she approached, he was struck by her 1950ish style. Her pedal pushers and loose cardigan reminded him of the girls of that era. All she needed were the curlers and hairnet. But unlike the thin, dry creatures of his memory, she had a vibrant oval face that only needed the ponytail unraveled to warm her fine features. She greeted him with abrupt sparrow-like gestures. He bowed hesitantly and felt the fluids freezing up his joints. She led him to the cafeteria and as he followed her bobbing tail he wanted to call time out to organize his impressions. Akemi introduced him to her younger sister who, it was explained, wanted to learn English, and could he get her into class? He nodded perfunctorily at the awkward girl and wondered how they could be related. He asked a few token questions while gazing through Akemi's words and drawing luxuriant waves of hair around her face.

"Could you do that? It would be very kind."

"Ahh. I'm not sure I know what you want, er, what I can do, but I'll check at the school."

They stumbled their way through some introductory formalities and he tried a few phrases in Japanese but with less success than Akemi's English. She seemed older than him, but that was part of the attraction. He wanted to know this odd woman, this mixture of briskness and sensuality, this lovely figure locked up in adolescent clothes. The question was how to express this interest without offending her and violating Kishi's confidence in him. He hadn't a clue to his friend's mind and could hardly write him. On the bus home, he was halfway into a romantic fantasy before he had to nudge himself back to earth and get off at the right stop.

For their first dinner together she invited her sister and another couple along. Ron grinned bravely as they trooped through his living room with Akemi bubbling Japanese and pointing at the clutter of papers and books in the corner of the room.

"Sorry, I meant to clean up but you're early."

"I just say you are a teacher. They can't imagine one man have so much space." She stepped around his pause and headed for the kitchen.

"I got some food in the refrigerator."

"Oh yes, we cook, I tell them everything how to do. It's okay?"

"Sure, sure. It's up to you."

"Up to me?"

"*Dijobu, dijobu,*" he mumbled his catch-all Japanese word for all being right.

His pronunciation drew giggles from all four. Then Akemi whirled hand over her mouth, "Oh, I must introduce you. This is Tatsuo and Mariko Inaba. They are on holidays, one week only. They don't know anyone so I ask to come here with us, okay?"

"*Dijobu, neh*" he opened his arms to emphasize his welcome and got a chorus of giggles in return.

In short order Akemi had organized the kitchen, delegating tasks like a general. Ron sat back and

wondered at her energy. She checked the vegetables one moment, directed her sister to set the table, then turned to keep up the conversation. He was beginning to feel like a guest by the time dinner was served.

"Very good, *oishi neh,*" he directed at everyone as he tasted the tempura. The others nodded acceptance and chimed in together, "*Itedakimasu*" before joining him. He remembered the Japanese custom of saying that before eating and kicked himself for forgetting. Suddenly he was in Japan again and trying to be equally formal but failing miserably as usual, knocking over rituals right and left.

The rest of the week was all tours and meals with her fellow travellers. He was reminded of Tokyo station with its waving flags followed faithfully by some group or other. And Akemi was a leader with her own little flock of friends and acquaintances. He felt the impulse to get closer but that proved impossible as she bubbled with explanations and extras. He was gradually reduced to interpreting her behaviour from afar, but his observations had no indication of any interest beyond the proper recognition. On one carefully calculated evening, he ended up alone by candle light and chilled wine as she suddenly swerved away to attend to a lonely neighbour. The longer he sat like a cat outside the house, the more obsessed he grew with desire to find a way in. Brushing his teeth in the morning, he worked on possible lines to display his personal interest in her. But he could hardly be subtle with such a limited vocabulary and her ubiquitous friend.

It was not until the third week that he was able to catch her alone. They sat opposite each other - he, relaxed on the couch and she, perched on the edge of her seat. He began to suspect that she had chosen this moment rather than he, but then it didn't matter to him anymore.

Smashing the champagne bottle, he launched the conversation.

"Isn't it rather unusual for a woman of thirty not to be married in Japan?"

"What means 'unusual'?" she leaned forward.

"Women in Japan marry about twenty-two, don't they?" he rephrased the question landing on *Why are you not married?*

"Ah, so they do," she paused before giggling. "Once I tried arranged marriage. First we met in a restaurant. He hold his cigarette in his hand long time and finally ask me why don't I light it. I said so sorry, then smoked my own. He stopped the wedding plans."

Ron rocked back and forth, chuckling at the exquisite image,how aptly it reflected Japanese tradition. She had made passing comments about wanting to be an obedient housewife, but he couldn't see her in the role.

"You said you travelled to Europe before?" he ventured to keep the door open.

"When I was twenty I left Japan with two friends. I lived in a hospital and study English. It was so hard. After that I go, ah, *went* to America and then Mexico. I got very sick there. When you get sick you only want to go home, so I returned to Japan."

He considered his own adventures and realized he was still a timid university student while she was out in the world trying to survive. He felt a bit outflanked, held his breath, and then pushed on.

"Were you involved with anyone?"

"Involved?" she rolled the sound on her tongue as if that would provide a clue to its meaning.

"A boyfriend?" he added with distaste for the term.

"Yes, for one year," she responded as if expecting the question. "He studied to be a doctor but he was really a musician. He was a funny man. Every time he wanted to see me he put a note under my door. His best friend told him that if I leave England, I will not return. I received letter from him last year. He married."

"How do you feel about him?"

"It's difficult to explain." she pursed her lips as if looking over old files. Her raised eyes were warm but empty.

"You must have many girlfriends," she teased him.

"I wish I could explain the way I get involved with women," he searched the ceiling for an entry to his story.

"To other people it might seem that I have many girlfriends. I think I have loved and been loved. But I am still growing and changing too quickly. Sometimes before I start I am thinking about the end, that I will leave or they will, or that there is no magic. You know what I mean?"

She nodded hesitantly, then began describing her own relationship with a man in Japan who was waiting for her to give up her crazy ideas and marry him. Ron adjusted his perception of her again. He caught himself trying to build walls around her only to watch her burst through them with a single story.

"By the way, what do you do in Japan?"

"I have a small restaurant, oh,it is very hard, but I have some help from my friends. Ho, you must treat the cook with much respect and pay for so many dinners for your help. They don't like young women to run such shops. But my friends help."

"Who runs the restaurant now?"

"Oh, I sell it. I'm tired after three years, so I'm taking a holiday with my sister, it's nice *neh?*"

He nodded in sympathy and admired the determination and yet openness of this woman who was unfolding her life for him. He had always prided himself on his own independence and yet that seemed overshadowed by her struggle against the stream of Japanese society.

"Maybe you should marry your friend."

"I don't know. I cannot explain but I cannot marry him," she uttered in return. "You are not married."

Picking up his thoughts again, he rambled on about deciding to make travelling and uncertainty a way of life, about his rejection of the marital battle-field as a dying game. Her head began to tilt in confusion so he backtracked through friends who were separated or divorced. "Most people look at these troubles and think of themselves as exceptions. I consider myself typical of a whole generation that must find something else besides traditional marriage. I don't know but perhaps the leaders of our time are people who simply marry five or six times."

"What!" she caught the last phrase like a slap.

He shook his head, "Our worlds are very different. I am a drifter and dabbler and you are a business woman. I am trying to change and you want to become more traditional."

"Yes."

She looked down at her watch and reached over for her purse to indicate that his time was up. He glanced back over the conversation and grimaced at the way he had strewn obstacles across their path. He wondered whether his fantasy woman had been consumed in the first breath of intimacy. His own laughter echoed in his ears. He was so terribly sincere in his cynicism while hoping against ridiculous hope that she might understand.

He called a cab and they waited in the unlit hallway. He trembled slightly as she leaned forward to whisper that she was taking a short trip to Calgary to see some friends. He nodded understandingly while wondered at the timing of this evening and trying to gauge her feelings. Then his hand floated across the darkness, circled her shoulder and drew her into his chest. She crouched with restraint inside his arms and his lips curled with frustration. At the honk of the cabbie, she slipped through the doorway leaving him to fumble with the lock.

A week later she flew up to his door uncluttered with friends. Floating over sidewalks by her side he held her tight, but looked away, too afraid to stop and ask for explanations, words to describe their path to this intimacy, signs to reveal the deeper mysteries of her change. In the cafe he studied her face to learn more and suddenly he was thinking of a poster of Yoko Ono and his surprise at the emphasis on the age lines in her face, the haunting sadness in the eyes, the wizened weariness of a woman growing old beautifully and alone.

He remembered watching her with absolute fantasy at a rock concert in Japan as she performed the most outrageous series of screams he had ever heard sold as music. He tasted again his shock as she split into two realms between songs; one second addressing the audience in the soprano pitched daintiness of Japanese womanhood and the next ordering the band members to adjust their mikes in solid alto English. He saw similar lines in emi's face and wondered at the strength beneath. There seemed no time to speak in his search for her source spring, no entry between her sips of tea and gazing out the window. As she set her cup down, he felt the rushing waves of her attention pour over him. She reopened the door.

"What would you do ten years from now?"

"I don't know, perhaps teach, perhaps write, perhaps anything. I would like to be able to do anything, can you understand that?" he spouted each phrase. "I don't want to make a lot of money or get ahead in the world. Most of the people I see doing that are stiff and narrow, afraid and unfeeling. The little material security they have is supposed to protect them against the world. What a joke!" He was alone again shouting across a roaring river at those inquisitive eyes. With excited hands he tried to draw pictures of people surrendering their dynamism and self-confidence in exchange for jobs and cars - objects. His face strained to explain his search for work that would help him survive without violating his sense of purpose or worth, without killing him slowly with boredom and routine.

"I'd like to try some community work or something," he threw out to her.

"What is that?" she caught with choreographed timing.

"Oh, working with people, sometimes it's good, sometimes not." He wearied of climbing the mountains of impossible words. She could hardly be expected to understand him yet he was driven to try to communicate his thoughts. He thought of the man in "Woman of the Dunes" scrambling hopelessly in an effort to scale the sand dunes. She reached across the table to soothe his ruffled nerves before they wandered out into the night.

At his flat they huddled together on the couch. He was surprised at the ease with which she curled up in his arm and he pushed off for deeper waters.

"What are you doing?" her voice was laced with curiosity and a touch of uncertainty.

"Oh, just take off your shoe," he replied in his most casual romantic tone.

She giggled and lay back, letting him slowly if cumbersomely undress her. Under the clothes her warm flesh greeted his hands. Bending, weaving, whispering, he removed his own protection and embraced her. She shivered and twisted, keeping him back like a dam holding flooding waters. Then she cracked and let him pour over her, still guiding his head as if riding the first great wave. He was conscious of their timing and moistened her thighs to ease the joining. As he rose above her, she captured him below in a tentative clasp and smiled as she led him in. Then he was pumping smoothly, high on the wave, flying down the track, riding the edges and swerving away, teasing the waves licking his toes before diving into oblivion.

"Funny our bodies fit so snugly," he whispered.

"Yes what time is it?"

"Let's see, about four, why?"

"I must go back."

"You're kidding, I mean what's the difference now?" He didn't even want to consider the October chill now.

"My sister does not know. No one must know," she laid down the first rule and began shuffling through the clothes around him.

"This is nuts, the bus has stopped, the Y is probably closed," he countered, looking for a pause in her sorting, a hesitation to drive more words into. "Why not tell your sister you got up before she and went out. I mean how will she know?"

"No, she saw me last night and I never wear the same clothes another day. No I must go; can you call a taxi?"

He waited to measure her determination and caught cold steel in her glance.

"Sure, I'll even come with you." He resigned from the match and picked up his socks.

From that scene on, their words circled around the next two steps, her departure and her return. They went to the movies and sought clues to their own romance, went dancing with friends and drifted off together, lingered at coffee houses and made plans in low voices.

"What will you do in Japan when you return?"

"I should stay with my mother sometime, she is getting older and I must clean the house for her. Later I work for a friend until I return."

"And when you come back, what can I offer you besides this crazy love? It must seem strange to you that I can talk of love and not consider marriage, that I can ask you to return and give no guarantee. Can it be possible?"

"I understand. I know a man here who has a restaurant. I work for him. But first I must go home."

For a moment he wondered how the guy in England had felt as she departed, relived the women of his

travels clutching their fears and searching his eyes for a sign, as he now stared at Akemi.

"What would you do if you stayed in Japan?" he probed cautiously, giving in to his fears and trying to pry open her mind. "Work in an office or something?"

"No, I am too old. Younger men cannot work with older women, they could not take me. No, I have a good friend in a small company. They want me to open a gift shop in Guam. Perhaps that."

The creases in her face cast shsdows making her appear much older. He was drawn to her sadness and burning eyes, to the knowledge that she would never again be young. He sensed that she had begun to bend beneath the weight of Japanese tradition. He thought of another friend's mother who ran a snack bar in Osaka. She had welcomed him with a motherly patter and a trim figure. He gathered that the father had been a rather timid character still in his home village while she had ventured out alone. He had hidden his discomfort at the attraction he felt but couldn't resist watching her play the mama-san, sip a drink, stroke a shoulder, laugh lightly while keeping the business rolling.

She was Akemi's spiritual sister. Akemi was too wilful to submit, to stay at home and let the treadmill of household chores grind her to a humble end. And yet there was a fear lurking in her words and he saw himself as a straw man delivering only false hopes and even greater risk. He was the man on the street calling out to the heroine trapped by fire, high in the building, shouting at her to jump, as he stood solidly on the ground.

In the pale moonlight their romance grew into an eerie ritual, the dance of the mating cranes, yet only the dance. The sharing of pasts, the pleasures of lovemaking, the groping for discarded clothes and the waiting - then always the whispered talk of her return. Each time he covered the conditions, she would nod understandingly; yet his words felt more like bricks for an invisible wall. Then he would seek refuge in her arms, clinging to her like a drowning man. Some mornings he awoke in a sweat and looked round for signs of her stay. But she never left anything behind.

As her departure drew closer he could feel himself withdrawing, becoming more critical of her, stiffening himself for a separation. She brought a new friend along to a dinner and he became quietly irritated at Akemi's manner of dominating the conversation, cutting off her friend with such blithe authority. Ron blinked with surprise at his thoughts, shook himself as if to break out of the surrealism of his changing emotions. When they were alone, he clutched her more desperately while still rallying his own forces, trying to stay on top of the raging undercurrents.

Suddenly they were waiting for the air porter instead of the cab. They had grown luggage appendages full of clothes and promises. At the depot he had an urge to understand the beginning.

"You know I liked you from the first time I saw you at the Y."

"I liked you from the first time I hear your voice on the telephone," she replied.

He twitched with surprise as a chain reaction of events, words, and suspicions jammed his analysis board. "Did Kishi-san write that letter?"

"I did." she giggled.

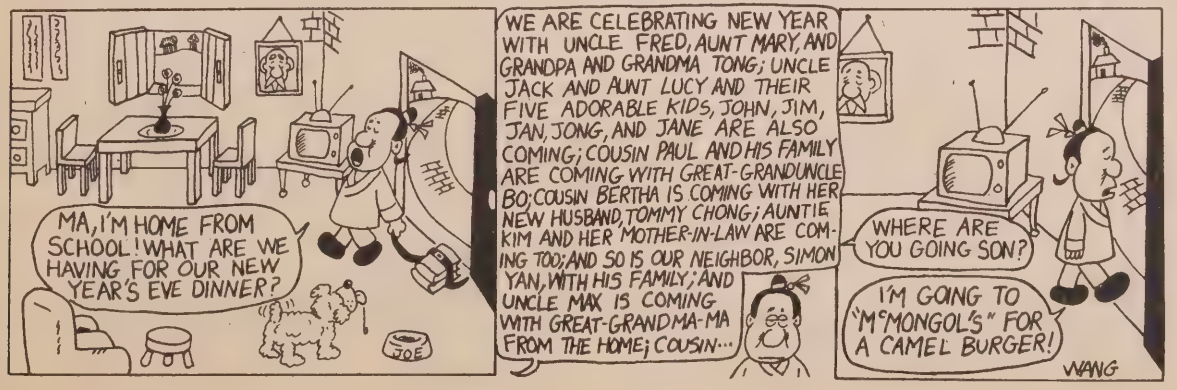
"Of course," he chuckled and pressed her closer. He looked back over his feeble attempts to lure her into his web and chuckled again. She had wanted him from the beginning, but had played him like a puppet. 'e felt betrayed more than by his own clumsiness than by the realization that he had met a woman far more deft in the art of intimacy. He still wanted her but wasn't sure what she wanted. She still had the trump card in her heart and her eyes gave only warmth away.

As they loaded her bags, he felt helpless. Their lines had been written and memorized. The curtain was falling, he had only to whisper good-bye and the applause would follow. But the word stuck in his throat and he was barely able to nod as she stepped onto the bus. The doors folded and she was out of reach.

She called from Hawaii and said she wanted to return. She sent warm letters to anxious hands but the messages were of delays, of taking care of her mother, of finding a temporary job, of waiting for her restaurant friend to return to Japan.

He sat at his table and stared at the collection of notes spread out before him. The months of waiting had worn him down. He looked out to the brooding clouds and silent mountains and took comfort in their timeless existence. The winter whiteness on the peaks was turning the deep blue of spring, his decision was nearing. He had only to let his hand write the words. He realized she could not return without a promise, if she were to come back at all.

He picked up a pen, tore a sheet from a pad and poured out his farewell. Then he packed away his dreams and ran off to Mexico.


MA, I'M HOME FROM SCHOOL! WHAT ARE WE HAVING FOR OUR NEW YEAR'S EVE DINNER?
JOE
WE ARE CELEBRATING NEW YEAR WITH UNCLE FRED, AUNT MARY, AND GRANDPA AND GRANDMA TONG; UNCLE JACK AND AUNT LUCY AND THEIR FIVE ADORABLE KIDS, JOHN, JIM, JAN, JONG, AND JANE ARE ALSO COMING; COUSIN PAUL AND HIS FAMILY ARE COMING WITH GREAT-GRANDUNCLE BO; COUSIN BERTHA IS COMING WITH HER NEW HUSBAND, TOMMY CHONG; AUNTIE KIM AND HER MOTHER-IN-LAW ARE COMING TOO; AND SO IS OUR NEIGHBOR, SIMON YAN, WITH HIS FAMILY; AND UNCLE MAX IS COMING WITH GREAT-GRANDMA-MA FROM THE HOME; COUSIN...
WHERE ARE YOU GOING SON?
I'M GOING TO "MCMONGOL'S" FOR A CAMEL BURGER!
WANG

GIG GOES ISLAND CRAZY

SKY LEE

At first, it took Gig a long time to get into Medicine. Then, it took him a long time to get through. All the way through - the School of Psychiatry as well. He remembered those long years as some type of fifty-thousand-hour-dance-marathon. Wind up. Bow to you' partner and tip you' butt. He thought that he had lost a lot of himself along the way, especially through Medicine. But then, he convinced himself that throwing up was a faddish new way to lose weight. He was glad that he had started young, stupid and undaunted. Because now he was young still, wiser, richer and unhaunted. Gig looked about ten years younger than his age. In fact, rather boyish really, and thin. He was tall enough though.

Lovely smooth skin. Black hair hung straight and thick. And his ears were ever so slightly protuberant, but Gig being busy all these years hadn't noticed. Once, when he was very young in junior high school, he locked himself in his mother's bedroom and stood in front of her full-length mirrors. In them, what he saw was then so hopelessly all wrong, so painfully shy that he quickly glanced away. And he never glanced back. So today he is already very established in his successful practice.

With his reputation for being casual and liberal-rated, it wasn't at all hard to accumulate a workable calling out of strung-out state hospital hippies, a whole segment of the lost souls population who are occasionally disorientated as to person: --, time: city-night, and place: cheap one bedroom with leaky taps. Give them a pill that sends them off to la-la land, and a five minute dose of firm words which force focussed their aimless eyes on his one gracefully long, pointing finger. They generally came back for more. Mmm. Gestalt baby food. Yum, yums. Gig with his long big silver spoon in group sessions.

Of course Gig beneath his sophisticated professionalism, had all the usual healthy human failings too. He sat in his privacy with lustful little secrets. Although the more expensive and elegant ones as yet rarely came to him. He usually went to them. But he could imagine them, smelling heavenly, coming and throwing themselves down on his couch, still warm and damp and golden from the morning's tennis lesson. Complaining of a pareunic disorder between their brain lobes, they were the fantasy types made delusive by their long absences.

Instead, Gig always had mixed feelings about his clients. He usually met the para-thirty divorcee with a red rashy face, trying to out-talk her suicidal tendencies - a second generation dee-pee. A mother like daughter looney. He often looked up and caught them drooling at him with grey speckled marble eyes. It made him feel uneasy. It made him lose his intense train of planned thought. Lust tends to confuse even the most forceful of ... well, Gig was without a doubt an independent thinker.

Once upon a time Gig came upon a certain point when he suddenly discovered that he needed a holiday - a real expensive holiday, far, far away. He couldn't exactly put his finger on the reasons which drove him to this extraordinary decision. He just instinctively knew as he leaned back on his chewed-over wooden desk and stared hard at the grey linoleum floor of the lunatic asylum.

Act now, ask question later. So he went out to sea because the sea was vast and blue and empty. Empty meaning devoid of human meaning. He flew and flew over it until the streaks of the last rays of orange sun shone back at him from the wings of the small airplane. The sea glittered beneath him as he hopped from one island gem to another. Each one a smaller floating gold piece haloed by pink coral reefs; each time in an older, shakier two seater plane which seemed to sag closer and closer to the crashing waves and the waving palms below them.

He had brought a friend along because he could afford to bring her and he needed company. She was good blonde company, with gleaming long legs beneath skimpy white stretch terry shorts. She was nice to dine with too. She drank and smoked and her beautiful eyes wandered from one male diner to another, while he chewed on shrimps and salad. He remembered when he asked her along. She wrapped her arms and later her legs around him tightly. All that night, she was exciting and appreciative - smiling almost hysterically.

However, on the evening that their plane tumbled down, she had been dreadfully bored, hostile and un-cooperative. She burned and itched with a heat rash and she pestered him for some relief. He gave her some aspirins and she complained from the back seat that he was uncaring for her.

The hired pilot of the light plane was typically Asian enough to ignore their bickering. Gig remembered his brown and boney expression hadn't changed even when Gig glanced nervously at him, with mouth too dry to utter a sound even though he pushed. For Gig saw just as the pilot must have also seen, the looming shadows of palm trees, their branches like thousands of gigantic bird wings in night-flight.

Sky Lee *worked with* Makara, *a women's graphic co-operative for several years, and later sat on the Board of Directors of Vancouver's Chinese Benevolent Association.*

When the plane struck the trees, Gig heard and felt each rip and jolting tear in vivid slowed motion. Aluminum foils crumpled all around him like he was a hot ham on rye. There was a brief hurtling forward and he felt his lungs collapse under a huge weight.

Gig had been conscious off and on but he couldn't open his eyes. He smelled blood and heated metal oily smoke and night air. Though he was only vaguely aware of his mangled swollen body, his thought were crystal clear, lengthening like cold dripping icicles. Some of them felt and splintered into a million pieces with a light tinker.

Sometime during that long dew dripping night on the jungle floor with his body covered with countless, pointless pain, he dreamt of a bare-skinned creature with sweet warm breathing over his face. He felt cottony hair brush lightly against his cheek. He had lain there so perfectly still in the underbush, smelling foul rotten mud for such a long time that the quiet movement startled him. Because of it, he struggled toward consciousness. Almost suffocating and blindly clawing, he swam upward through wet murkiness but he struck against a retching pain so brutal that he immediately shrank back. Cowering, he fell back silently like a slow sinking ship. Years later, Gig figured out that it must have been a kind of cerebral captivity by his brain pit which had saved his life. It occurred to him one windy day on a park bench, watching a fat female balloon vendor whose tight fists clutched at the strings of an elusive cloud of coloured balloons. With her waist oozing over her stretch pants like bread dough, she fought with considerable might against the wind which threatened to shatter the nervous network of fragile fibres and disperse the floating cells into an eternal blue oblivion.

A young woman with furry hair stole into the underbush and crept beside Gig's body. She put her face down close to his and gently nosed him. She sniffed his face cautiously at first. Making quiet animal sounds like gasping she hopped from one side to another. Gig lay on his back perfectly stiff and straight. In his sleep, he held his mouth taut, grinding his teeth. She licked some dark dried blood encrusted on his tennis shorts. Some flesh oozing seemed to warm her on all fours. She threw her head back and grinned with open-mouth at the smoking wreck towering above them. Then she squatted on her heels, rocking back and forth, sometimes grunting or laughing at the full moon hung in the sky. Sometimes calling out musically, though no one answered. Sometimes growling, sometimes farting.

At least, this is how Gig imagined her on that first plane-wrecked night on a deserted island. And somehow, he just knew that the moon was the fullest deepest orange ever to have happened in a tropical indigo sky. He remembered the smell of her - like dusty animal fur with warmth of the noon-day sun still lingering in it.

Gig didn't know how long he lay there harbouring hopes of rescue but when he finally opened his eyes, they all sank into a loop in his stomach. He saw long matted strands of black hair gangling over him. Then, between a bent pair of skinny knees, he beheld the largest, craziest eyes of his long career. And he had seen plenty. Large teeth glowed from behind the shadowy thicket. She didn't blink an eye, but continued to regard him candidly. Her mouth stopped chewing for a split second but it resumed its rhythmical grinding. A dark swollen tongue lolling over cracked peeling lips. Gig was so apalled that he didn't move a muscle either. She squatted near his face as unashamed as she was naked. Soon, Gig heard next to his ear the sound of a steady stream of water pattering against the ground under his head. In a flash of disbelief, Gig thought she was pressing a button on the side of the water-fountain in the hall and bending over him to drink. Then he realized as if to complete his absolute awe of her, she was urinating on the ground right next to his head even as he lay there paralyzed, helpless, his backbone crumpled. She watched him blandly.

The stupid bitch! All the left-over anger kept spilling out of his mouth. God-damn piss-pea brain. Another shithead crazy to caretake. She gawked at him like a moon-struck calf. Suddenly, she stood up and grinned widely at him. And Gig realized that it was day, because the sunlight slipped into the dank jungle above her in streaks and cross-streaks. Giggling maliciously, she went around to his feet, picking them up and started to drag him over the ground. Painstakingly. Gig was terrorized. It seemed like he was screaming at her to stop. She deranged! She'll injure his back more by moving him. Stop! Does she want to kill him? For God's sake, please! Stop the terror. Gig must have fainted.

Gig wondered how she did it. She as anemic, malnourished slip of shadow; and he an hundred and sixty pound man, then sheer dead weight. She had pulled him at least five hundred yards over the stones and logs, across mounds and gulleys, and underbush, into the sunlight to dry out. So patiently and gently that he slept like a baby through the entire drag. He awakened on soft bleached sand, under the bright shade of a tall slanting palm tree and squinted at the gleaming wide beach and the deep blue beyond. Wind blew over him like rippling silk. Still, Gig didn't move. For a long time, he lay there limp. Finally, it was the smell of cool fresh water that drew him instinctively toward it. His body's terrible thirst made him thrust his parched mouth toward to drink long and hard. He finished the bowlful and fell back totally exhausted before he realized that he had moved; that he could move. She blinked at him, still clutching the emptied bowl. He thought then that she was quite lovely and somehow, much cleaner.

Stark terror is definitely another kind of cerebral captivity. Stark terror immobolized him. He had survived the crash intact enough, yet he estimated that he must have lain festering in a back-jungle mudhole for at least two days and three nights, slowly killing himself with stark terror. Ironically, Gig remembered, one kind of cerebral captivity saved his life; another kind left him exposed and very vulnerable.

The days of Gig's recovery were slow, cloudless and enchanting. And as he convalesced, he was not lonely. He watched this faraway creature who was strangely unpredictable and erratic. He found that he could not depend on her for food and water. In fact as the days passed and he studied her, he realized that she could hardly feed herself. She thinned noticeably each day. At first he thought she was hopelessly retarded, but somehow she was too agile. Her movements too graceful. Gig was fascinated with her endless and aimless playing with herself. He called to her for hours, and she ig-

nored him for hours. It was difficult to assess her age. Anywhere from a full pubescene to a young looking twenty-five year old. She gave no clues as she sat baking in the hot sand for hours, talking in autistic tongues. She was very beautiful. Her skin dark and smooth but it was grey-tinged and wasted. The dark circles under her languid eyes made her look sleazy like a delinquent girl who slept with her mascara on. Gig was not just a suburban boy who made good trading his formative years, and prestigious security in his degenerative years, he readily recognized the classic signs and symptoms of poverty.

When Gig gained enough strength, he went back to the wrecked plane to bury the dead and salvage food and medical supplies. She followed him and watched from a cautious distance. Later, he also gained enough strength to overtake her before she could run away. This was how he cured her of her runs which was rapidly dehydrating her. He cleaned out the lice, dressed her sores and powdered the ringworms. And he force fed her, until it got harder and harder to catch her for her daily treatments. But still, he was careful to let her go free after each session. This must have paid off because she eventually came to his thatched lean-to for her needs. She also came to trust him and his ways. He named her Webster because he onced had a stray cat named Webster who used to sleep on his dictionary while he studied. And she was just as good as if not better than a cat. Better. Definitely better.

She had a long adolescent body and thin tapered arms. Spidery hands. From a side-view, her legs seemed to start from her waist - almost no buttocks but then even according to deserted island standards she was underweight. From the back, there was nothing but dry wooly hair which made her look like a freaky plush toy on spindly legs. Hair grew in thick patches under her arms and in a peculiar heart-shape over her mons pubis. Gig was perturbed over a number of deep purple gashlike scars on her abdominal area, right around her hips and scrappy buttocks. It was a couple of these deep welts which gave her pubic hair that ludicrous heart shape. This made Gig speculate about her past. He didn't come to any definite conclusions though. There were too many other things about her to distract him - like her breasts. Ordinary boobs, Gig repeatedly told himself as his eyes repeatedly wandered over them. Her nipples were very large and dark. Well-defined. He loved to see them stiff and erect after a swim in the surf under drops of spray, or on a cloudy grey day when she faced the wind from the east.

He decided to dress her but a light tee-shirt made her provocative. Besides once she was out of sight and out of reach, she only wiggled out of her attire. As Gig explored the island after her, he would find Cougar tennis dresses washed up by the waves or lacy camisoles flapping in the wind or sequinned evening dresses crumpled in a heap by the watering hole. It was the first time that Gig thought about the stagy effects that clothing, especially women's clothing had.

Dress-up became quite a burlesque game for Gig, though it could have been a tragedy for Webster. She had such little control. Once Gig tried strapping her long thin feet in a pair of elegant stilleto heels to prevent her from running away. She stumbled around with her pelvis thrust forward and falling like a drunk stripper before she finally sank onto the grass babbling unhappily to herself. She got them off soon enough but not before the sight gave Gig the most enormously uncomfortable erection of his life.

Gig at his ripe old age had been in love before of course. But never enough. He found that love filled him with inertia instead of motivation. Ten years ago his mother and grandmothers, along with all their female relations began to annoy him by referring to him as the "Old Boy." For they had expected him to mate and propagate as appropriate but he didn't.

In this situation, Gig was trying to be a man of principle. It would have been low down mean and exploitively filthy of him to take advantage of such a pitifully retarded, backwoods, crank native girl. Obviously she wasn't capable of responsible adult consent and anything else would have been rape and Gig could not live with rape.

However on that sticky humid day when Gig decided that in order to keep the knats and lice within even the most minimal hygenic standards, her dense matted hair would have to come off, he also had to excuse himself by saying it was love. Though at the time, he couldn't quite believe it. With insufficient scissors to work with and flailing arms everywhere, Gig had to sit on her to pin her down and complete the task. She screamed and grunted; then she growled like a real wild animal. Under him, she writhed like a fish. Then somehow, she sunk her sharp teeth into his inner thigh and Gig thought his fishing pole was going to explode. It was surprisingly easy for Gig to forgive himself just as it was naturally easy to sink into her flesh and melt her into tears.

For a man of Gig's years, love is not blind. He knew that he couldn't just leave her behind - either on a desert island or in her own village with her own people. Both were hostile environments and meant poor prognosis. Actually neither of these options were seriously considered anyways. The fact was Gig would not leave her ever. Since Webster the size of his sex seemed to have grown twice as large. But he knew he wasn't going to tell his mother when she asks. "But mother..." he could say, "She's beautiful. Dress her up. Take her to any World Mental Health Conference and she'd be perfect wife for a Chinese psychiatrist. Or ultimately, he would say, "Many people waste much of their lives trying to find useless human meaning in life." But then, at the time, he didn't know that he himself would spend his waiting for one word from Webster.

However, the actual problems of getting her state-side into his luxury suite on the seventeenth floor of a modern up-town high-rise churned in his mind. Worst than that, when they got there, then what? Gig was pondering the question on the beach with Webster playing musical toes beside him when some fisherman who had wandered out too far spotted them. And he was still pondering the question in a Hong Kong hotel suite the night before their happy family reunion at the airport. Gig knew that there would be a complete family turnout brimming with curiosity over the "Old Boy's overseas bride." They would stand in front line of the huge amoeba airport crowd sweating and surging forward, sopping up new arrivals. He could hear them choking and

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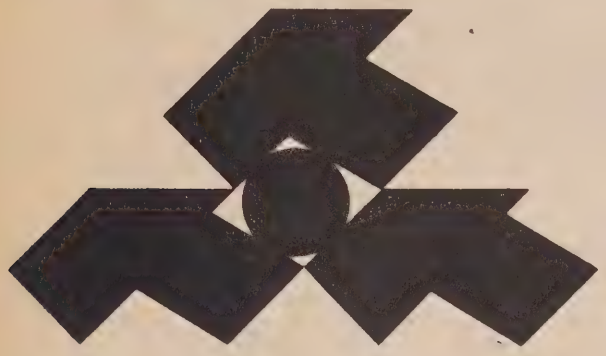
Community News



中華文化中心
CHINESE CULTURAL CENTRE

A MOST AUSPICIOUS DAY - A MOST IMPRESSIVE BUILDING

September 14, 1980 was a most auspicious day in the history of Vancouver's Chinese Canadian Community.

On that day the Chinese Cultural Centre of Vancouver proudly unveiled it's new headquarters, an event marking the culmination of eight years of hard work and sacrifice by hundreds of dedicated volunteers, and the realization of the vision of generations of Chinese Canadians.

Build at a cost of nearly $1 million, most of which was raised by the community, with help from the Provincial Government's Recreation-Conservation Fund, the new building houses the Centre's offices, classrooms, meeting rooms, activity spaces and a Senior Citizens lounge. It will needs of a diversity of community organizations besides the Chinese Cultural Centre, and the community at large.

The prodigious amount of effort which had gone into raising more than $1½ million for the building fund, and into negotiations with the various levels of government over the development of the center and the Chinese garden, required a high degree of organization and the unity of purpose, which speaks well of the development of a cohesive and united Chinese Canadian Community.

The past eight years have seen the Chinese Cultural Centre carry out many activities and special events in addition to its fund-raising efforts. These activities and special events deserve the credit for the public's positive perception of the Chinese Cultural Centre as organization.

Viewed historically, they point out the route that the Chinese Cultural Centre had travelled these past eight years and, hopefully, also the road ahead as the Cultural Centre steps forward into the future with its new building.

SMASH THE KU KLUX KLAN

The frequent appearance of the Klan members in T.V. shows and radio talks, the intensive KKK's drive for membership, and their escalating activities in propagating their racist, anti-gay, and extreme right-wing ideology, prompted some people into anti-KKK actions. The very fact that the KKK headquarters is located in 1439 Dundas East angers many concerned residents. The Riverdale Intercultural Council, Ward 8 News, Bain Apartment Co-op, Innstead Co-op, Coxwell-Gerrard Street Residents' Group, South Riverdale Community Health Centre, and a number of concerned residents and workers of Riverdale formed the Riverdale Action Committee Against Racism (RACAR) to oppose the KKK.

On November 1, RACAR launched an educational and cultural event to raise the awareness of the community. It began with an open house in the Sikh Temple on Pape Ave. (with films, food, and tours), followed by the showing of "The New Klan" at Eastdale Secondary School. This was followed by a series of educational workshops on the relationships between the KKK and women, trade unions, churches, ethnic groups, gays, etc. Food and music (played and sang by Grass Fire) were provided, and the concluding speeches were made by Rev. John Robson and Bob Kellerman.

There were roughly 300 people there and many of them felt that an event like this is much needed to educate the community. Some put their names down to do volunteer works, and many bought RACAR buttons and signed up the petitions to call for government actions against the KKK. RACAR will continue its educational works in the community. For more information, call (416) 469-1143, 469-3659, and 469-1819.

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shrieking "Geeg...Geegee!", and see their mucousy Kleenexes waving at him. Webster beside him, happily sedated with major tranquillizers, looked stunning in a splendid silk suit. Her hair, make-up and nails gleaming and styled to perfection as only Hong Kong beauticians can do to Oriental women. She drew attention wherever she went, not because of her bizarre behaviour. Gig had that under control. But because she was so exquisitely handsome, coolly regarding her new chaotic surroundings with a slight detached smile. Gig looked at her and wondered if expensive sunglasses might help to buffer the effect on his mother and grandmothers tomorrow. He pulled her down onto the bed and softly gathered her in his arms. Then he tenderly told her how sorry he was about pumping the junk into her veins but by the time he got her even as far as the first city, she was hysterical - slumped over the floor of a taxi in stark terror!

MORNING HEAT

paul yee

The tiled roof reaches high above. Glance left and right, then stoop and pull the arms straight behind. Flex the knees, swing the arms, up, and fly! Land soft and crouch low. Tonight, no failures. Tonight, this sword will taste blood.

Damn, dust inside the contacts. Ken blinked at the pinpricks in his eyes and squeezed his eyes shut. I better not fall off this goddam ladder. Somewhere, a child was throwing a tantrum and wailing into the oven of the morning. Shut up, you bastard, I can't hear the radio. He considered climbing down to raise the volume, but decided he was too much in position to move. His back tingled pleasantly from the sun, and he wanted the warmth to paint him a dark brown as quickly as possible.

He had told himself that working outdoors was the best part of this job. He would get a tan this summer painting houses. He would change his image permanently. Pale skinny bookworm intellectual to dark, supple tennis player. White teeth flashing. Tennis whites and Hawaiian brown. The colours of the bourgoisie. Then he'd meet some fine women.

The summer sun melted on his bare shoulders. He scraped furiously at the siding, tearing off layers of paint and slivers of wood. Puddles of chips formed as planned in the plastic sheeting. The muscle in the forearm began to ache, but he ignored it. Furiously. This work will put meat on you. I will strengthem myself. I fear nothing, nothing hurts. And the snowstorm of white chips intensified.

The courtyard below is dark. Moon glimmers in the pool of the rock garden. Lanterns cast flickering yellow onto latticed windows. Watch the patrol go by. Four men. Noisy. Fools, with swords sheathed. Tilt the head sideways and listen. The breeze shivering in the bamboo. The ticking of an insect. Time to move. Leap down, over the fencing, through the third door and -- what? Whip around, tense the sword arm instantly. A figure hurtles out of the dark, from above. Someone had followed! But the dark figure lands close, catlike and deliberately too close for either to draw swords. Eyes meet. It is a girl.

The girl danced barefoot onto the rolling lawn, rising on her toes and turning like a doll mounted on a musical jewel box, and la-la-lahing up and down the scale imperfectly. Ken watched her dip and pirouette towards him out of the corner of his eyes. The old man's daughter. Cute, but she's not bringing me any lemonade, that's for sure. Nice tan, though.

"How's it going?" She came to a stop under the ladder. A voice that tinkled.

"Fine..." Ken smiled weakly. Roll your eyes, shrug your shoulders and pretend its a boring job. You know, you don't really want to be here, you'd rather be sailing...

She looked at him with frank and indifferent eyes. It was his turn to say something. Break out of your shell, he told himself. Ken leaned forward, "Well, what're you doing this summer?"

"Me? I flip!" And she did. She leapt into a short run, sprang high, and cart-wheeled in mid-air. Her torso twisted smoothly and her long legs stretched for the ground. She landed in a half-kneel, then stood up and flung the loose strands of long black hair out of her face. "Pretty good, huh?" She smiled from ear to ear. Ken feasted his eyes on her. A lithe body, tight at the waist, round and firm behind, with two cheeky breasts the size of apples. Not flat and skinny like other Chinese girls.

"Yeah! Hey, I'd clap. But I'd raise too much dust." Ken was impressed and interested. He hoisted himself to the top of the ladder and sat. Waited for more. "Isn't it dangerous to work without mats?"

"the grass is soft enough." Her eyes narrowed on him, "Do you do gymnastics at all?"

"Are you kidding? I'm lucky if I can touch my toes!"

She shook her head, wondering. "Anyone can limber out. You can do anything you want!" She began swinging her arms, straight out at shoulder level, turning from side to side as her eyes followed her fingertips.

"You been training long?"

"Since I was ten," her words came out in even spurts.

All the worldly noises of the morning seemed to have faded away. Ken sat mesmerized by her rhythmic movements, watching her glistening thighs tighten and loosen, alternately, tighten amd loosen. "When I was ten," Ken began, "I went strawberry picking in the summer. All days, on my knees. Killed my back. I guess I was pretty flexible then."

She stopped for a moment. "Strawberries? Mmm, I'd like to have gone."

If only you knew, Ken thought. "It was pretty bad. Outhouses that reeked. You should have seen the Chinese ladies fight for the berries. 'You're picking into my row,' they hollered. And they swore like you never heard women do."

Ken kept his eyes on her. Maybe she could leap as high as the girl on the tiled roof. "I never heard women screech like that. One lady picked up a buggy and went chasing after this kid that was sassy to

her. She was going to beat his head in. Unbelievable."

He watched her sit down, line her feet straight in front, and then bring her forehead down to touch her kneecaps. Her hair slipped down to conceal her face. Ken was transfixed by the simplicity of her movements -- straight, right angled, and double straight. Okay guy, enough, he said to himself. She's heard enough. Get back to work, will you?

"Did you make much money?" Her voice was muffled.

"Are you kidding? We got 80¢ a flat." Ken sounded eager. "Took me an hour to fill one up. Ten hours a day, eight dollars a day. My brother used to make that in two hours. God, I hated it."

"Eighty cents is bad. What happened to the money?"

"Gave it to my mother."

Silence followed. and Ken returned to his scraping. Yeah, we used it to buy cardboard for the soles of our shoes. Eighty cents? That bought four loaves of week-old bread at the Safeway. Time for a break yet?

That girl, she's a sparrow diving over a burning desert. She'll never be a warrior. Her heart's in the wrong place. But then, nobody starts out in life with the right heart. Vengeance, the family's honour, the people -- these were to be fought for. These were the intangibles worth the discipline, the pain, the training. The *see-fu*'s presence was always felt. "Know who you are and who you fight for. That's all I ask."

There had been brittle mornings, clean and cold, with a frothing serpent of green and blue churning through the dark round rocks of the river bed below. A deeper green crowned the pines above and a darker brown anchored the cedars to the earth. To the clearing where he practiced. Breathing techniques, flying kicks, the sword, the darts, training the eye, honing the reflexes. Days, months, and years had passed -- he remembered little. After all, what good was a fantasy if it were painful?

The years showed only in the slow confident steps and the defiant look in his eyes. The shafts of sun streaking through the trees could have been his weapons. Its energy coursed through his body, controlled but for one instance. The caress of a woman. If only he could show this to her.

"Hey! Talk to me!" The girl on the lawn lay on her neck with her legs folded over her head. Her back was as sleek and as long as a panthers. Ken's eyes moved up her legs, to where they joined. There was a tight V there, drawing him in, swallowing his gaze. Ken's lips felt dry, and he let his tongue lick and linger over them hungrily.

She brought her legs up, forward and down slowly. Her breast heaved and jutted as she let out a long breath. "You ready for a break? I'll get some ice tea."

Up close, Ken's senses pursued her like pins drawn to a magnet. A tart cologne tinged with sweat brushed his nostrils when she stepped by with the tray. Her body, a spiral of curves and winding lines, moved with the deftness of a ballet dancer. Ken's fingers itched to toy and linger along the gentle spoon of her back. Tiny freckles were peppered across her nose and cheeks. She looked fifteen but her movements betrayed a maturity within. Ken sank into a lawn chair and watched her. She smiled perfectly and evenly. Ken wanted her. But first, there were the word games.

She put her glasses down and brought her knee up under her chin. "Why do you paint? You hardly look the type, you know." As if she had known him for years.

Ken groaned inside. He glanced down at his chest and legs. Nothing I can do about my height. Under the light coating of white dust, the muscles and tan were slowly emerging. "What do I look like?" he challenged her. Engineer, doctor, lawyer? Waiter, grocer? She didn't seem the type that cared. She'd go for someone big, someone brown and rich.

"I don't know," she laughed at herself, "It's silly for me to say. You have such a serious face. Intense, you know. You ought to be a professor."

Ken felt a brief flush of pleasure at the comment and drained his glass with a gulp. "Don't I look like a painter?" Ken's eyes were still drawn to the dips and crevices of her body. Ken felt his shorts rustle as he became stiff and hard between his legs.

"No, you don't. It's obvious you've never done this before. Why do you do it?"

Ken felt his face redden. She had seen right through him. "A change in life, I guess." He shrugged, "I don't want to be a skinny bookworm all my life."

She looked him straight in the eyes. "So," she pressed, "What do you want to be?"

"I don't know," Ken shrugged again, "Anything but skinny and bookish." Anything but uncontrollably horny, goddamnit!

"Oh?" Her eyes teased him. "How about big and strong, tall and dark?"

"Sure!" Ken exclaimed eagerly. "Only thing, you can only go so far."

Sure, she agreed with a knowing nod. "That's how it is with all of us. But at least go to the edge and see what it's like."

continue on pg. 18

chinatown for-

JIM WONG-CHU

curtain of rain
another act unfolds

chinatown
forever changing

you and i
actors, audience
watching, being watched

pender street east
nothing dampens its spirit

quiet yet dignified
unassuming yet proud
hidden under umbrellas
steady as raindrops

april/79

ever changing

sunrise

i see you
wrapped in clouds
deep
dense
stifling
impenetrable

watching
concerned
helpless

wishing
you would
lift your head
to see that
the sun was
shining on you
all this time

Jim Wong-Chu is a Chinatown enthusiast who documents the Chinese Canadian past and present through audio tape and photography. Jim recently worked on the forthcoming CBC film "Gold Mountain".

continued from pg. 15

Her eyes seemed suddenly severe and accusing. Ken felt like a bewildered six year old. Who is this girl? What is she? Some kind of mystic? And then she looked away. "Hey, come on, I'll show you a simple stretch for your back. It's called the cobra." She jumped up and ran to the flat stretch of the lawn.

She had moved too quickly for Ken. Do you think I'm faking this? She's toying with me. She lay down on her stomach, and pushed her upper body up with her arms and pulled her head back to arch her spine inwards.

The warrior would have leapt down and challenged her to a duel. Enough of this mockery! But she would be a tigress. All the female knights in the movies were fighters of the highest calibre. More agile, quicker, and lighter. In a contest where skill and precision and not strength counted, there was no room for chauvinism. She could probably match him stroke for stroke, move for move.

He narrowed his eyes. He had to find her weak spot. He smiled to himself. Never reveal too much of yourself. It could only be a disadvantage.

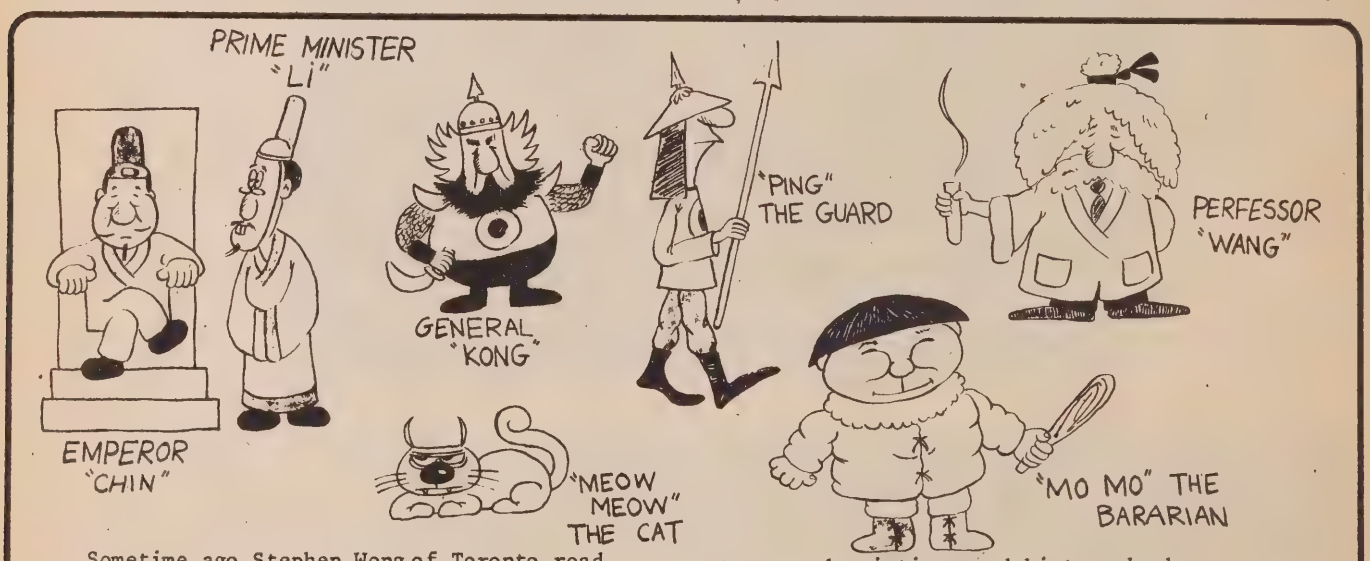
"Hey come on! Give it a try!" Ken followed and lay down quickly. As he pressed his hips to the grass, he only intensified the straining in his shorts. It was feeling good when he arched his back and rocked himself, finding his rhythm, driving it, and driving it. Hey, this is no time to jack off, guy. Not here, not in front of her. Ken let his body fall to the grass and lay limp.

Where was she? He twisted from side to side. He was in no state to get up. She was nowhere to be seen. The glasses stood empty by the mute lawn chairs. The ladder leaned against the garage. Only the plactic sheeting rustled. Ken felt his body loosening, subsiding. In relief, he sat up.

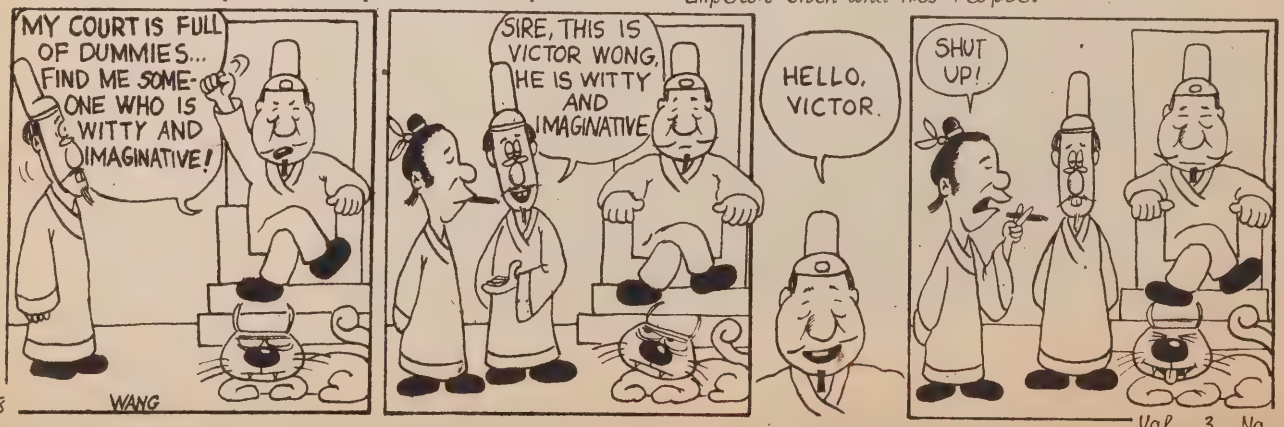
Bitch. You could never trust them. They had guys a dime a dozen. But with a body like hers, why not? Ken lay still for a moment, then turned onto his stomach and began doing push-ups as if his life depended on them.

This story was written for a collection of stories entitled Asianporn *in 1978.*

Paul Yee *is on the Board of Vancouver's Chinese Cultural Centre and recently organized a series of workshops on Chinese Canadian history and community.*



Sometime ago Stephen Wong of Toronto read the papers and found out that they have just dug out the ancient tomb of Emperor Chin. This tomb goes back to two thousand years of Chinese history. Pictures of hundreds of stone sculpture guarding the main entrance of the burial ground excited Stephen. So he spend the following weeks and months searching for materials of this particular period : sculptures and paintings and history books on the lifestyle of the Chin dynasty. Then he spend the next months drawing fanatically a comic strip based on the historical figures of this time, Emperor Chin and his Prime Minister Li, and not forgetting his generals and people. The concept is still evolving and *Asianadian* is proud to be the first publisher of *Emperor Chin and His People.*


MY COURT IS FULL OF DUMMIES... FIND ME SOMEONE WHO IS WITTY AND IMAGINATIVE!
SIRE, THIS IS VICTOR WONG, HE IS WITTY AND IMAGINATIVE
HELLO, VICTOR.
SHUT UP!

Give Voice

In March 1980, Seattle poets Lawson Fusao Inada and Alan Chong Lau (the Buddhahead Bandits) came up to give a poetry reading at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre. In the afternoon they sat down with a number of young Sansei and Chinese Canadians to talk about writing. The workshop concluded with an exercise. We were all to choose a person or place in Vancouver, either public or private, to give voice to it. We sat down for ten, fifteen minutes and wrote. Then we spread ourselves around the room, locating ourselves geographically to approximate our Vancouver locations. The following are some of the places from the afternoon.

The B.C. Royal Cafe, Pender Street

SEAN GUNN

We sat in the back round table, surrounded by red tubular chairs. I ordered a dai bau, and coffee, and boston cream pie. I don't know about the coffee but to me, the dai baus are the best in Chinatown, or anywhere for that matter. Most of the eating places in Chinatown are restaurants, but this place is a true cafe, complete with a counter, behind which stands the usual coffee machines and pie and pastry cupboards, almost like a western style cafe, except for the steamer for baus and shu mai. They serve Chinese food also, but that is cooked out of sight in the back kitchen, so the overall feeling of the place at least physically is that of a Lofaun coffee shop. However, psychologically, it is an integral part of Chinatown. The majority of the customers were Chinese, and the popular language spoken is Cantonese, except for a pocket of English in the back, us. We are all there after another one of our countless meetings. It seems that getting involved in a community means a plague of meetings, and the B.C. Royal Cafe is a good place to unwind and socialize, a place where to get to know each other better after the grueling sessions trying to decide the future of the community.

Effort to Glimpse

BARRY WONG

Alan was talking about his mother. So was Fusao. About how they went to college : one was thinking of becoming a teacher; another had gone to university for a while. Gee, my mom never did that. Never came close, you know. Her school was this grocery store... maybe something like Alan's mom, huh? Dropping out at Grade 7 or 8 and then more work getting hassled as a domestic, then this grocery store, right in the heart of beautiful dirty lofantown. Sometimes I'd remember her on the one day-off she'd have in a week; some big holiday -spend the day moving cases down the Cash 'n Carry wholesale. And the unloading at home -- gee, sometimes I wonder if those pretty rouged ladies today in the discos could chuck and stack cases and take stock half as fast as she could. Maybe I'm not talking only about someone -- or some places --maybe I'm looking and listening about this interaction. This feeling of change that gets passed between a person and a place like my mother and the confectioners : the Bayview Dairy goh-doy-sahup, you know? the person -- like she's the one who used to run down Victoria city streets and getting pointed at by the white's cane as she recited to herself, Bahk-kay, fong-dong, gay-doo and all these other herbs *her* mother knew were needed. The place used to be a dairy -- like the ice-cream the kids knew as well as the people who owned the place. The big tall warm Christmas tree; the change to the grocery store; and - I guess there's more to it all than the interaction happening now; it's this historical past-tense interplay and charge exchange : place to place, person to person, person to place. That was the reality then; and that's what makes the reality now, I guess.

I betcha this writing don't flow so hot; could use some chronological arrangement, a little more style, better choice of vocabulary, you say? But then that's the way thought goes, eh? I mean like some electroencephalograph needle my pen scrawls across the page in the transferral process of images to images, from past to present, from present to present, and from present to past to future.

Family Hero

SHARON LEE

I had a dream again last night. I dreamt of my friend who died in the grassy suburbs, surrounded by pink and ochre flower beds; on a neatly clipped lawn. She yawned and said to me "Take care of my child. She needs someone." Then she died and she turned into a shiny brass plaque on wet chilled grass. The plaque said in chinese characters which gleamed against the slaty sky. This is the corpse of Family Hero, 1951-1979. At first I cried, tears flowing off my cheek and onto my big black umbrella. Tears dripped all around me. Then I fretted. I fretted because of the dates on the plaque. They got the dates all wrong. Family Hero began long ago, even long before mass education. In the corner of my eye I saw a vague skinny, listless child who flitted in and out of the trees. I imagined her in school. A small black mass of hair in amongst mickey mouse erasers and damp red woolen socks. And I spoke to her quietly at first "And family Hero will live a while yet - just you wait and see.", hoping to lure her out of the shadows so I can touch her face and bring her home.

The Swamp

RICK SHIOMI

It had been known as the swamp before I discovered it...outside the front window of the old white house that I moved into on Cordova Street. It was the swamp, full of winos and muddy tracks in the winter...and hard dirt, dust and more winos in the summer; when things finally dried out in Vancouver. At four o'clock the line of hungry faces would dangle along one side, waiting for the door to the Franciscan church to open and hand out chilled baloney sandwiches. This swamp was the heart of skid row, it waited outside my window for those coming down to finally surrender, lie down and wait for the end. This swamp was the Powell Grounds hidden beneath decades of human waste. This was the Powell Grounds where my grandfather once walked with pride, where my elder sisters once crossed to attend school at the Franciscan church. I too fell face first into the mud and tasted for the first time that mixture of bitter tears and soaring joy in finding the past.

The Aunt in the Nursing Home

PAUL YEE

I'm the one who made him rich. Me! Ask anyone. Everyone down in Chinatown knows.

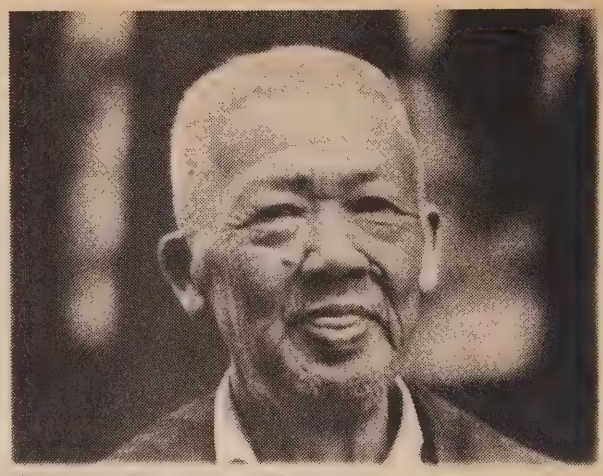
I told him to buy the store. Go ahead, I said, There's money in the Gungso, Just ask for it. And I had my money saved up too. I gave it to him. There's nothing I didn't give him so that we could have the store.

Him, he had nothing. He came in from the lumber mill in Port Moody, pulling planks, planks as long as the sidewalk.

He was the biggest fellow around, no one else could pull them off the chain like he could.

Gow Sum, she was the one who introduced him to me. He had a wife in China, I had no one but the baby. So we had dinner at Gow Sum's place a couple of times, and then we moved in together.

But we were never married, never legal, so that's why I don't have anything now.



The Warrior

JIM WONG-CHU

Yun Loong was an old man, but he was different. Naturally, being 93 years old, he kept telling people like me, "I am old". He had, to me, the wisdom and the power of life itself. He lived because he wanted to live. He lived on sheer will. He must have.

Yun Loong was a left-over from the Tong days. He was a fighter in the days when Chinatown had to protect itself. He fought Whites and Chinese alike. Anyone he felt threatening to the environment, his life, his tong, his family...well, no, now, come to think of it, I'm not exactly sure he had a family, but I heard he had an adopted daughter somewhere.

He was a Freemason man. For this reason he could not let me photographed him. He said, "Before.. if I had a fight, I hide. Policemen would go to the tong, look over pictures on wall, point out the suspect, find me and arrest me. No pictures. I never allow pictures."

I haven't seen him for some time, but I still hear about Yun Loong. He got into a brawl on Pender Street and beat up three or four whites that were harrassing some old men. Ninety-three and still beating up people. He's my kind of hero.

Weeks later, I felt the urge to see this old man. I didn't know why, maybe it was because I hadn't heard from him for a long time. I wanted a photograph of my hero. I sought him out. He wasn't around. In fact, he hadn't been seen around Chinatown for quite a while. I heard he was sick. I thought of visiting him, but got side-tracked.

The next week-end rolled by, and I ran into Yun Loong by chance on the street. I looked at him - his face was like ash. The sparkle had left his eyes. I asked him, "Yun Loong Bak, have you seen a doctor? Are you alright?" He replied, ever spirited, "only a cold, bad cold, I make my own medicine. I'll be alright, never see doctor all my life."

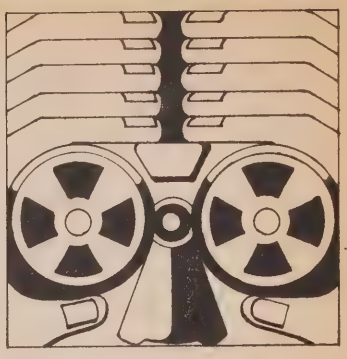
I knew this man. I could never reach past his pride. A thought came to mind, "Can I please take your picture?"

He looked at me, became thoughtful, smiled and said, "Next time, you can. I want to dress up first. Don't want to be seen in these clothes." He fidgeted and brushed his coat and trousers, "Next time."

I looked up, happy and thankful. We smiled and parted.

The next weekend I heard he passed away.

Face to Face



Pender GuY with BAMBoo BReW

On January 28, 29, and 30, Philip Gotanda, Robert Kikuchi-Yngoyo, Sam Takimoto, and David Hwang brought their songs of Asian America to Vancouver. Their performances were vivid, clear sounds of their individual experiences; their music was uniquely Asian American. The following is an interview of the four members of Bamboo Brew *as broadcast on Pender Guy (CFRO-FM 102.7)*

Pender Guy : *What is* Bamboo Brew?

Robert : *Bamboo Brew* is a temporary fusion of musical forces. Phil Gotanda, David Hwang, Sammy Takimoto, and myself, Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo.

P. G. : *Is there a goal towards which* Bamboo Brew *is striving?*

Philip : Basically all of us are committed to being Asian-Americans and all our expressions consequently are Asian American. At this point in time, we're all separate groups working in different areas. We got together for this one particular gig and from here it's hard to say where it's going to go.

P. G. : *Then in San Francisco were you all separate performers or did you perform together at all?*

Philip : Well, Sam and Robert have been working together in a group called *Bamboo*. David and I have been working on and off together for about a year. But as a group, we've never really performed before the Vancouver trip.

P. G. :: *How would you classify your music?*

David : I think it's quite varied because we all have different types of influences. It's difficult to type it but I think that perhaps Robert is more interested in jazz and Latin-type music and Sam does all sorts of things. And I kind of have a jazz orientation. And Philip's has a definite punk orientation. Country punk.

I think it's clear from tonight that we have a lot of different types of styles because we all try to integrate the music we like and the way we want to express being Asian Americans. We are trying to integrate that into one concert. So the styles are quite varied.

P. G. :: *You talk a lot about Asian-American music. Can you define it?*

Sam : That's a real tough one. Well, I can only go on based on my individual say-so of what Asian-American is. And for me it's reflecting me being Asian-American living in America. It is a real kind of personal reflection in my music. And I don't know how Robert feels and Dave feels about it because I think it's a real personal thing.

P. G. : *Robert, do you feel the same way?*

Robert : I'd like to further what she said. When we talk about Asian-American music, it's a reflection on what Asian-America is. And in America you have Asians living all over the country : Asians from Texas, Asians from Seattle, Asians from eastside L.A., southside Stockton, San Franscisco. And each of those cultures is different from the other. They're specific but they're their own little world. For example, Asians in east L.A. are very familiar with Buerritos and Latin music and a lot of them associate with Latin friends. And, see, you just get a fusion of culture too. Asians hang out with all kinds of people, not only with other Asians but with blacks, browns, greens, purples. So that's a reflection of fusion in America. So whatever comes out of that in any art form is a reflection of that. Being Asian-American and calling yourself Asian-American is a conscious effort to define a historical context. Saying 'I am Asian; it has a history; it goes back a couple hun-

→→→

dred years, ever since the first Chinese, Japanese, Philippino landed on this continent' is a political statement, just out of a conscious effort.

P. G. : *Then, would you call your music 'political'?*

Robert : I think that all music is a reflection of a political context. Punk music is a reflection of urban frustration or technological frustration. Reggae is a reflection of a political and social world that is happening in West Kingston, Jamaica. Latin music or black music is what's happening to those people. And Asian-American music is a reflection of what's happening to us.

David : I think, in a way, that any type of Asian-American or third world writing - writing in terms of music or any form of art expression - is inherently a political statement simply because it is an attempt of people of any colour attempting to define themselves for themselves in this country. Instead of letting the dominant society or the white majority tell us what we are, we're saying, 'No, we want to figure it out ourselves.' And that is inherently a political move.

P. G. : *Phil, you write plays. You've had several produced. Are you more of a playwright or a songwriter?*

Philip : At this point, it's a kind of transition phase for me. I had, up to this point, (been involved) mainly in music, that, writing and performing music, but it's starting to head more toward theatre and I think it's just a natural phase and it's kind of interesting watching yourself follow through on this kind of phase. But it's heading more and more toward theatre because, for myself, I'm finding performing rather exhausting. It requires a lot of rehearsal and I'd rather spend that time sitting at home and writing and creating. Different people have different orientations. Right now, there's an idea cooking around where I think all of us have an idea in terms of music as far as performance cutting across a broader range, combining different elements, kind of trying to combine a new chemistry. In other words, not just getting up and doing the tunes, but rather perhaps incorporating some theatre techniques, movement, perhaps costumes, perhaps poetry, dialogue, along with a musical concept, all within a musical concept, all within a performance context. So, for myself, I see myself heading away from straight music and performing, heading more towards writing and possibly with this group of people heading into another kind of form of performance which incorporates more elements.

P. G. : *But everything you do would classify as Asian American?*

Philip : Okay. I'm going to speak just for myself. At this point in time, I make that choice to call all the art forms I create Asian-American expressions. But, of course, they're more universal and they can fit in a larger context also. In other words, the term 'Asian-American', 'Asian-Pacific American', is not exclusive; it's inclusive. And it's a focus and a context. In looking at the present social climate, the political and social kind of schemata, I choose to call myself 'Asian-American' and the forms I create, Asian-American literature. Further down the line it may be important to say perhaps something else. But it's not just that. It's also other things. It's third world. It's the universe.

P. G. : *Dave, you also write plays. Are you tending more towards playwriting than songwriting or performing?*

David : Well, I don't write a lot of songs. One of the reasons I started writing songs is just because I was stimulated by working with these people and the fact they all write songs. I consider myself a writer before I consider myself as a musical performer. I've always kind of performed music most of my life but kind of as a sideline. I'm beginning to feel like, as Philip said, the two are certainly not mutually exclusive. And I think, as he was saying, there is a kind of movement within the four of us. We've just kind of been throwing ideas around lately of trying to create some sort of a theatre context for our music.

P. G. : *So do you think that you will play together again as a group, Sam?*

Sam : Well, I hope so. We didn't talk about it in detail about what was going to happen to all of us once we got back to San Francisco. But I think through experiencing what we have so far, we've all gotten a pretty nice idea of what we can do together. We'll have to talk about it in detail when we get back. But I hope so.

P. G. : *Sam, you're the only female amongst the group. How do you get along with these three gentlemen?*

Sam : Well, gee. It's really been interesting actually. Well, when I started singing, I have always been singing with males. So I guess right now I've learned not to think about (our sex differences). As far as getting along, it's been really good. We all share in the things we have to do as far as loading and unloading, and going over the set, and I think it's really a balance of equalling things out amongst each other. I think it's working. I really enjoy it.

P. G. : *You also have strong political convictions, as evidenced by your introduction to the Hawaiian songs. I was wondering if you had political convictions closer to home, that is, in California?*

Sam : Oh, yes. There are a lot of things happening in California. And most of the music we do when we are in the States is a lot of benefits for particular fundraisers. In San Francisco, for instance, they had a big

rally to support the saving of a building which was for the elderly in the midst of Chinatown. We've been involved with that for a while. Also, we do a lot of other community things. In San Jose there is a particular organization that is trying to prevent San Jose Japantown from being taken over by big business like what happened to San Francisco. This organization is trying to prevent big business from buying property and making Japantown into a real tourist site. We're used to doing particular benefits for this.

P. G. : *Are most of your performances, then, benefits?*

Robert : This series of performances we've done up here and in the Northwest is the first time we've been together. We did one performance I guess before we left and that was for Choi Soo Lee who is a Korean immigrant framed for two murders and is on death row. We performed about a half-hour set. And we're all pretty much familiar with the case.

P. G. : *How did you get involved in the case?*

Robert : About two years ago we had a concert of Asian songwriters. Someone in the audience came up to us and said, 'Ley, can you guys get this song together?' He had a rough draft of it. We worked on it and got a recording made and proceeds from record sales go to Choi Soo Lee's defence committee. So that was one way of using music as a way of doing something not just for ourselves but trying to get the idea out and letting other people know about it.

P. G. : *But you must be pretty well convinced that he has been unfairly treated, if not innocent?*

Robert : Well, once you gain political consciousness, you kind of learn to check out things and see things just beyond the facade. In other words, when you look at the history of, say, what's happened to the Indians or what's happened to the blacks, or Chicano history, or Asian history, it starts expanding your level of consciousness. You start thinking, 'Wow, Hey, what's happening with America? What's its history? What is it based on?' It's very easy to see that the judicial system is not for people who don't have money and it's not meant for people of colour, or who just don't have the power. It's meant to maintain status quo. There's a mainstream culture. But the main thing is power and the dominance of money, of capitalism, and that is what is oppressing people, not just people of colour but people who have to work eight-to-five jobs and pay rent every month and that whole rut.

P. G. : *Do all of you agree with that kind of a view?*

Philip : In the general sense, yes. I mean in the sense that Robert is saying that you have to look at situations. You read about it in the newspaper, 'So and so shot somebody in cold blood. So many witnesses testify. He's on death row.' You have to look at a larger context, that is, the person's situation. If he is an immigrant, what an immigrant has to go through : how he arrived here; why he or she was forced to leave; what kind of things she had to go through when she arrived here and how she ended up in that situation. And when you look at a larger context, you examine different elements of that context : economic factors, capitalism, political factors. And I think it's not so much pointing a finger and saying, 'There is a white dominant society' or anything like that. It's rather a situation and perhaps a group or a context which allows this to happen. And in that sense, I agree with Robert that you have to look at a larger picture in any situation. As you begin to understand it or gain a perspective, there comes a commitment to act, and how you act varies with different peoples. In our sense at this point in time it happens to be the medium of music.

P. G. : *Does the song* Visions *incorporate that idea?*

Robert : Well, 'Visions' was written to show that there's a lot of things trom the past we've got to learn if we're going to project some kind of change for the future. And the future is not an easy road. To say, 'Down with capitalism; up with socialism', is such an easy statement to make. Yet, I think all too easily people jump on the bandwagon and say, 'Yea, yea, socialism' whatever. But, they don't really understand what that means. People need to do their homework and to have an understanding of what one way of life is and there constantly has to be an understanding of an ideal situation. Like, say the ideal society is one equal accessibility to all the resources in the society. Then, we've got to really have an understanding of economics and politics, of how people work and how people

can work together. And it's just not an easy thing to just say, 'Let's wipe out this thing over here and put this new formula in' because that's not the way history works either. It happens in small ways and happens by people being convicted to a love of humanity.

P. G. : *It's a nice thought, but aren't you being a bit of an idealist?*

Robert : I think that idealism is important. The reality is that people don't have enough. They don't have a vision. They don't have an ideal. And people just get in their way of life of consuming things and not thinking of the guy next to you or your brothers or your sisters or your neighbours. You just start getting non-idealistic and non-humane and you start to isolate yourself from other people. People just need to expand consciousness.

P. G. : *Do you think, Dave, that the striving of consciousness is basically what the Asian American movement is about?*

David : Well, the Asian-American movement and the Asian-American experience is very diverse. I can speak only for myself. "Consciousness' is a big word. I mean, everybody throws the word around that Asian-Americans should gain'consciousness'. But it's never clear what that means from person to person. In my case, I started out just wanting to be a writer. I just wanted to write plays. But I also thought they had to be plays that were truthful and they had to be plays that would mean something to people that I love and care about. I want people to love themselves. If my plays could help them do that then I felt that would be very good. So, of course, I started writing a lot of experiences about my parents, people around me, Asians I hang out with, and stuff like that. And even though I had no desire to become 'political', I was just sort of led into a realization that as we're people of colour, we sometimes don't have the luxury to only think about our art, that once we start really looking at these stories and looking at the past and at history and what our friends are going through now, we start to find that, as Philip says, it all comes into a broader context, that there are more things you have to consider. For me, that has the beginning of 'consciousness'. I've only been into this for a few years and so my evolution is at a different point than a number of, say, these people who've been at it longer. But for me that is what 'consciousness' meant - the knowledge that I had to consider myself an Asian-American and that it had implications on everything I did.

P. G. : *Sam, do you think that non-Asians can understand the music you people are playing?*

Sam : Well, I believe so. Tonight we were told that the audience had quite a percentage of non-Asians and after the performance a lot of people came up to talk to us and said that they really enjoyed our music and said that they enjoyed the content of our music. I don't think anybody would say that unless they understood what we were singing about. I think we put it in a way where it's not hard to understand because music is very universal. Even if you don't understand the language, you understand the feeling.

PENDER GUY

Barry Wong

Pender Guy. 'Pender Person' in English. 'Pender Street' in Chinese.

Wednesday nights at nine, FM radio listeners across British Columbia can tune to Vancouver Co-operative Radio, CFRO-FM, and catch Pender Guy. Produced by Chinese Canadian volunteers, Pender Guy is B.C.'s English-language Chinese Canadian radio programme.

But first, an important point. As Pender Guy sees the term, a 'Chinese Canadian' is any person who, of Chinese descent, has been in Canada long enough for Canada to affect that person. A Chinese Canadian born in Canada, then, is as much Chinese Canadian as a Chinese Canadian who has come to Canada from Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, the United States, Europe or elsewhere. From Pender Guy's view then, you, the reader of this article, are almost certainly Chinese-Canadian.

Important-point-number-two. 'Why in the world would a Chinese Canadian radio programme be in English?' The answer is quite straight forward. Many Chinese Canadians have acquired English as their primary tongue; perhaps French is their second language, and maybe Cantonese rates at best merely a distant third. The various Cantonese-language radio programmes simply do not reach and do not substantially help this large segment of the Chinese-Canadian population. Indeed, even among those English-speaking Chinese Canadians who *can* surmount the language barrier, surely at least some wonder, 'Exacly how is Cantonese opera - or Peking opera - important to me as a Chinese-Canadian living in Canada?' A question of relevance.

So that's why Pender Guy is around. A community radio programme on a community radio station, Pender Guy strives to explore the Chinese Canadian community - past, present, and future - and to help develope Chinese-Canadian culture. That's right :

Barry Wong is a founding member of Pender Guy, the English-language Chinese Canadian radio program and has been researching, producing, and scripting documentaries, commentaries, and satiric sketches sinc 1976.

not *Chinese* community and culture, but *Chinese Canadian* community and culture - the community and culture of a people with roots extending far back, winding through a labyrinth of discriminatory immigration legislation, head taxes, racist riots, and shattered dreams, through athletic successes, ballot box victories, and at least partial acceptance in the Canadian multicultural mosaic. Curious thing, this Pender Guy, you say. How did it start?

Pender Guy's glad you asked. Once upon a time (in 1975), the British Columbia Chinese Canadian Youth Conference focussed the attention of young Chinese-Canadians on questions such as at what point does assimilation become a bad thing? How can Chinese Canadians deal with racism? What roles does Chinatown play for Chinese Canadians who live in it - and for those who don't? How is the growing consciousness of women of sexist exploitation affecting Chinese-Canadian society? Many questions. The results : few answers - and more questions.

A group of young Chinese Canadians from this conference carried out a number of activities, one of which was the *1976 BETWEEN US CHINESE YOUTH CONFERENCE*, looking specifically at the stereotypes native-born Chinese Canadians applied to Chinese Canadians from overseas and, conversely, the stereotypes Chinese Canadians from overseas applied to native-born Chinese Canadians. It was from this 1976 conference that Pender Guy sprang forth, with much assistance from the folks at Vancouver Co-operative Radio.

Pender Guy hit the airwaves in May of 1976 with a weekly half-hour pre-taped show. Between that programme and Pender Guy's current weekly one-hour part-live, part-taped show, content and style have evolved substantially. Pender Guy's creative writers have scripted radio dramas touching upon Chinese Canadian history, discrimination in hiring practices, the cultural gap between a traditional Chinese Canadian mother and her somewhat assimilated son - even a radio drama expediting the effervescent episodes of Super Pender Guy, the anti-racist, anti-sexist Chinese Canadian super-person. Music-wise, Pender Guy has aired some Chinese and Hong Kong pieces, but also a number of pieces by Japanese Canadians and by Asian Americans who have composed and sung about experiences very similar to those of Canadians; as well, Pender Guy has promoted local Asian Canadian musicians through airplay. History programming on Pender Guy has included a number of historical and cultural documentaries incorporating background research and aural history interviews performed by Pender Guy workers : *The Chinese Canadian Laundry-worker*, *The War Years* series, *One Day in the Middle of Autumn*, and *Simply Rice* represent a few of these historical and cultural documentaries and features. Considerable air-time has been devoted to public affairs coverage of events and issues affecting Chinese Canadians from within the community. Items have included a focus on racist writings by a local newspaper columnist, a look at developments in Chinese Canadian community organizations, coverage following equal employment opportunity and affirmative action programmes (that help women, visible racial minorities, and the physically handicapped catch up on career opportunities lost historically through discrimination), updates on the evolution of the Chinese Cultural Center, perspectives on youth problems among Chinese Canadians, interview about the barbeque meat products dispute, coverage of the issues involved in the struggle to give the Chinese Benevolent Association a wider community base, coverage of the CBA Canada Day celebrations, interviews on the question of whether racism of misunderstandings led to residence problems at Simon Fraser University, presentations following the fight to halt distribution of the National Film Board's *Bamboo, Lions and Dragons* production - the list goes on and on; recent public affairs coverage has included a documentary on community protests against the CTV W5 production of *Campus Giveaway*; as well, prior to the federal and provincial elections not long ago, Pender Guy presented various questions from Asian Canadian community organizations to all candidates running in the federal Vancouver East and provincial Vancouver Center constituencies - and broadcast the candidate's responses.

Presenting radio with a community impact is a major emphasis at Pender Guy - but not the only one. In recognition of the fact that few Chinese-Canadians have entered creative radio, Pender Guy encourages Chinese Canadians to explore media in general and radio in particular, in support of Vancouver Co-operative Radio's overall objectives. In 1977, this media-training facet of Pender Guy took on special significance as funds granted by the federal government were channeled towards training young Chinese-Canadians in radio methodologies.

Whereas Pender Guy has received some grant funding (obtained with the assistance of Pacific Unit 280 of the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans of Canada), most of the on-going operational expenses incurred are defrayed through private donations. It is important to remember, though, that these expenses would be much higher if not for the generosity of Vancouver Co-operative Radio itself, a community-oriented radio station.

Besides Chinese Canadian radio programming, many exciting shows happen on CFRO-FM (102.7). On Sunday, for example, listeners can expect a show produced by and for kids - and another show done by teens. Many different kinds of music shows exist as well, focusing on rock, blues, new wave, classical, jazz, folk, reggae, country and western, and other genres of music. Co-op Radio broadcasts music live and direct from places like Rohan's, the Hot Jazz Club, and the Classical Joint, and records music live from a host of different locations. And as far as public affairs coverage goes, Co-op Radio offers wide-coverage shows along with perhaps some of the most intensive and specialized programmes in the lower Mainland : one show broadcasts Vancouver City Council meetings; another show covers labour happenings from a working people's perspective; another deals specifically with the problems faced and culture shared by women; two of Co-op Radio's shows focus on public affairs and information for the gay community; yet another programme deals with the wide-ranging impact of law on listeners. There are many more programmes in these and other categories on Co-op Radio - where volunteers spend hours and hours making entertaining and informative radio a labour of love.

If you are excited by the idea of working as a volunteer in this radio station or if you want a free programme guide, you can phone 684-8494 during office hours, or you can drop by 337 Carrall Street in Vancouver. If you'd like to join the of hordes of bleary-eyed creative and confused folks at Pender Guy, phone 684-8494 just after ten on Wednesday evenings.

a short story by Rick Shiomi

U.B.C. CO-ED KIDNAPPED

This is the continuation of an excerpt from a long story on progress. The story is a loose spoof both of a Mickey Spillaine genre of detective novels and of the stereotypes of Asians prevalent in the Charlie Chan and Mr. Moto genre films.

In the last issue of Asianadian, *Sam Supedo was asked to investigate the mysterious disappearance of Sansei co-ed from fraternities at U. B. C.. During his investigation he met Nancy Wing, a cub reporter from* Vancouver Sun. *She offered to help in the case, and even invited Sam over to dinner at her own place. There, the suspected kidnapping ring whisked away Sam's assistant, Tony, who was hiding behind a tree outside Nancy's house.*

It was only seven when I left her place so I wandered slowly along Robson Street to the office. I considered letting Tony suffer the consequences of his own carelessness until I remembered how difficult it was to find partners in the business. I figured to check Dusty's about ten when the action got rolling and hit the frat house after that. The late night visit would add some drama to the game. I was betting on catching somebody with his pants down.

At the office I cruised the room again checking for any signs of tampering. Satisfied that nothing was amiss, I dug out old John, my first piece of action. He was a heavy .45, dark and cool like the night. When John took a guy out, he never came back. I squeezed the trigger a few times to get the feel of him before slamming the clip into place. I slipped him into the back of my pants but they started to sag and the metal sent a chill up my spine. That was the only problem with old John, he was a bit hard to handle discreetly. I shoved him into my coat pocket and felt ready for the butterfly blonde, the bear and big ears, if only I could find them.

Dusty's was one of those trendy and sleazy disco dives. It was all tinsel and easy broads out hustling three piece suits. Just inside the door I slipped on my shades before mounting the steps. The familiar disco thump poured down the stairs over my head. A breezy blonde brushed by me at the top of the stairs. She was built along the lines of the other one, that much I could tell from the rear action. I gripped old John and followed the swaying hips to the bar. The blonde hair cascaded over her shoulders, unlike the straighter mane of the other one. But hairdressers could do wonders and a disguise would be simple.

She sat on her stool, cool as a cucumber, sipping her pina colada. She eyed me in the mirror, her lips smiling like a welcome mat. It was too easy, she had the big nose and the baggy boobs, but the other one would have been uptight at the sight of me. I made one last move to make sure.

She swivelled in her stool and stared me dead in the eye, fluttering her false eyelashes. "Well honey, I like my men dark and mysterious," she cooed.

I nodded silently and figured on a way to con her into crossing her legs.

"The strong silent type eh? I'm a talker myself... and a drinker," she whispered and downed the last of her drink. "I find the booze makes me more sociable, it works like an aphrodisiac."

She was waiting for me to order her another pina but that would be like pushing coins into a parking meter and I didn't have the time or the change. She blew her hand by tugging her dress up as a come on. She had plenty of thigh but no butterfly. I patted her on the knee and stepped away.

It was going to be a tough search because Dusty's was famous for its blondes. The joint was the perfect cover for this ring. I took a seat by the stairs and studied the dance floor. It was packed with ripe flesh going to seed, with blonde heads, natural, dyed and wigged, bobbing to the beat. The familiar odour of sweat and cheap cologne filled my nostrils, reminding me of the afternoon in the cramped office with the Captain and O'Folley. These people had abnormally large sweat glands as well as noses, busts, bellies and feet.

"Any luck yet Pop?" the words pierced my ear drum.

I cringed and tried to play dumb.

"I said any luck yet Pop?"

"Okay kid...pipe down. Who dragged you here?" I shouted back, keeping my eyes straight ahead.

"You...I just trailed you around like a good reporter. It was fun playing cat and mouse," she giggled.

"Very funny...this could get hot. It's no place for a sweet kid like you," I figured to con her with a compliment.

"No way Pop...we're in this together," she held her ground like a thorn in my side. It was big of her to include me in her team.

I spotted the sour puss bear in the far corner. He appeared to be arguing with a blonde. It had to be the same pair. Suddenly she stood up and headed for the powder room. She hadn't left anything at the table and I knew there was an exit out that way. There were only a few seconds to bet on whether she was going to fix herself up or really take a powder. I studied the bear who had an expectant look on his face and decided to let the action ride. I was tempted to tell the kid to take a powder but the risks of her blowing our cover were too great and this pair was dangerous.

"Hey isn't that the guy who slugged your partner!" she shouted into my ear.

I shook my head to shake off the echoes and told her to keep her lid on.

"Okay, this is it... if you want to help you better listen up tight..I'm gonna face off with the bear. You stay put and keep your eyes peeled. If the blonde gets back early, scream, faint or do something to attract attention," I whispered and shoved off across the dance floor.

It was rough going with elbows and hips jabbing me from all directions. I could barely protect myself and keep the bear in sight. I paused behind the last couple who were bouncing awkwardly to the beat. My fingers tightened on old John, ready to move at the bear's first false move.

"This seat taken?" I said casually, stepping up to his table.

The guy went pale and exhaled a grunt. His eyes were about to pop out of their cavernous sockets.

"You remember me," I smiled confidently but still standing cautiously behind the chair.

He sat rivetted to his seat, staring at me like a Sphinx. His hands were locked vise like on the arms of the chair. My heart flickered at the thought of what those hands could do to human limbs. But behind my shades my eyes gave nothing away, I stood there like a piece of the rock. The slightest sign of weakness would have caused this bear to lunge for my throat. My whole body tightened in anticipation of the flash when our struggle of wills burst into violence. I guessed he'd favour a forearm smash so I squeezed old John and shifted to the side to cut down his angle of attack.

The kid screamed making me jump suddenly to the left. She had a hell of a voice when it came down to cases. The hairs on the back of my neck bristled as I twisted it to glance over the kid's way. I felt a faint breeze across my face as if the wind was blowing over my grave. I shivered and instinctively ducked, remembering the bear was a mere arm's length away.

The bear had jerked up as if propelled by some involuntary twitch. At first I thought it was the kid's scream, but canned that idea as too far out. He wavered in a half risen pose, his lower lip hanging loosely. Saliva dripped from the corner of his mouth. He might have been suffering a seizure from the shock of my appearance or the kid's scream but I was taking no chance, holding old John on him. He was going to spill his guts or I would do it for him.

In another convulsion he slammed his chair back against the wall. He swivelled drunkenly at me, raised his massive paws and staggered towards me. For a moment he wavered like a huge redwood about to fall. I wanted to shout timber but I was the only one in danger. His chest twitched again snapping his head back and he keeled over backward smashing the table and sending the glasses flying. I crawled over to him and found him still breathing ever so slightly.

"What's the gig?" I whispered into his ear.

His last sound was a "Phi". It could have been his last breath but I had to take it as a clue. With that the body quivered and stopped. He wasn't about to talk to anybody, anymore. A closer inspection of the body revealed two tiny darts stuck to his lapel. I shivered at the thought that they had barely missed me and probably nailed the bear by accident. Staying alive in the business was a game of inches so I stayed low, not wanting to give the blonde a bigger target.

The kid crashed through the circle of onlookers. She had a real bull in the China shop way about her.

"I had to scream... the blonde used a blow gun from the powder room!" she exclaimed, "Are we going after her?"

"Sure kid... but in our own sweet time... don't worry." I tried to calm her down.

"Keep clear folks...bartender, call the ambulance. This man has suffered a cardiac arrest," I declared in my best take charge manner. It was the way to deal with herds of these people. They were uncertain and milling around, chattering about this sudden death. One wrong word and they might have stampeded, making me the second victim of the evening. I swept up Charlie, grabbed the kid by the arm and headed for the front door before anyone thought of detaining us.

"Aren't we going to wait for the police then?" she whispered on the stairs.

"That's for green horns...we've got to stay ahead of the game... and that means hitting the Delta Phi Gamma House."

"You mean Phi Beta Gamma."

"Yeah," I muttered and promised myself I'd dump this light weight at the first convenient trash can.

The street was slick with fresh drizzle and I shivered at the thought of waiting for the UBC bus at that hour. I let her arm go and started towards Granville, pushing my collar up against the rain.

"Wait!" she called after me, "Why don't I give you a lift...if you'll give me the scoop."

"I don't make deals kid," I tossed back.

"Oh don't be so heroic!" she shouted, "Why can't you let me give you a lift?...what's wrong with me?"

I paused and pulled out my Casio. The buses ran every forty minutes at that hour and I'd just missed one. Time was becoming crucial and the mustang gave me mobility. I weighed the pros and cons and swivelled around, nodding my head.

"You're in...but on my terms...right!"

"Right!" her voice cracked and she scrambled after me. "The car's only a block from here. By the way, have you ever considered letting someone do a profile on you?"

"Look kid, being a private eye means just that," I grumbled, already beginning to regret my sentimentality. She was still a cub stringer after a scoop and that didn't jive with me being a private dick nailing criminals. That made her dangerous as well as distracting. I could see myself in the weekend magazine, "J'town dick exposed". I'd never be able to live that one down.

We jumped into her car and roared off to the campus. Riding alongside her I noticed her skirt had a thigh high slit. I was appreciating the shape she was in, lean and firm, until a tiny blue tattoo popped my eyes out. It was a butterfly, but smaller and higher up. My mind rattled off the odds against it being a sheer coincidence. The chances looked slimmer than her thigh. She was fitting too damn cozily into the scheme of events. It was a sure warning in the business.

"If we're partners you shouldn't be staring at my legs, that is unless there are some clues down there," she chuckled.

"Don't flatter yourself kid... I was admiring the needlework."

"It was part of a story I did on tattoos," she pouted, smarting from my razor remarks.

"So you just had to have a butterfly done on your thigh."

"You got a thing about butterflies?" she glanced at me with knives in her eyes.

She was either a great actress or simply didn't get the point. The car was getting warm from the steam she was letting off. I pulled my collar down to let the air circulate around my head.

"Touchy aren't you," I poked further, pushing her to see where she'd jump.

"You brought it up," she glared back.

"I was just admiring it, remember. And then, maybe I've got a thing about broads with butterflies on their thighs... and about that partner idea... you're on the wrong track kid. You're here for the ride... nothin' more."

A twinge of guilt shot up my spine as I noticed a tear form on her cheek. I wasn't usually a sucker for waterfalls but this kid was getting to me.

"Okay kid... don't take it so hard."

"Sure, you're just another tough guy... with a heart of stone."

"Nail on the head kid... guilty as charged."

"Why does it have to be that way? I mean here we are on the way to the frat house, together."

"Yeah, sure... but it's too dangerous for a kid like you."

"That's your hangup... it was exciting back there. If you'd have let me follow the blonde she wouldn't have gotten those darts off. If I hadn't screamed you might be stretched out beside that other guy... I mean you're too important to get knocked off like that."

She paused and bit her lip. "You know... you're not that old... I mean a little more concern about appearances would do wonders," she continued, brightening up, "being fifty is not the end of the road."

"Yeah... sure, iron my shirts, press my pants ... make me look ten years younger," I groaned.

I pulled my collar up and leaned back into the soft leather seat. The mustang's floating sensation soothed my weary muscles, making me drowsier with every mile. She clammed up for a change and I cooled my engines until we got out to the campus.

When we pulled up to the mansion, all the lights were on and the reggae rock of the "Police" wailed out through the dark. From across the street I could make out the bodies crowded into the ground floor rooms and lounging on the lighted verandah. We cautiously approached the mansion from the side, picking up bits of shouting and drunken laughter along the way. It was still drizzling which gave us more cover but also made the grass slippery and began soaking Charlie.

I reached back to grab the kid's arm to caution her but she caught my hand in hers and gave it a gentle squeeze. I was about to let her know there'd be no fooling around on the job when I tripped over an unmarked fence.

"Goddamn mothers!"

"Are you okay Sam?"

"Sure... just gotta be careful at night," I murmured, swearing under my breath at the tear I could feel in my pant knee.

She giggled and patted me on the shoulder.

"Shut up or somebody might hear you!" I hissed.

"Yes Sir!" she saluted in the dark.

She was lucky we were on a big job. Otherwise I would have taken the starch out of her make up in a hurry. Young snappy fashion plate reporters were not my cup of tea. This whole mission was probably some kind of *Harlequin* romance for her, or something pulpy like *Angelique on the Westcoast*. If I had had the time I would have knocked the stars out of her Marjorie Morningstar eyes. I could have told her a few stories of mouthy reporters who had tried to stray off the beaten path and wound up in the Fraser River. But I was too hot to cool her out so I turned and continued our line of attack.

We stayed low behind the cedar fence enclosing the grounds. Every few yards we stopped to check the action inside. It was tempting to pull out of the wet grass and step into the warm house, but the risk of being recognized was too great. Through the window we could see the kids jumping around spastically to music.

I thought about the traditional role of fraternities in the *hakujin* communities. They had originated as secret societies which allowed only members of the upper class into them. I remembered reading books on power elites and how they ran countries behind the facade of democracy. The frats had served as training grounds for all the nefarious arts. The Greek names were linked to Western educational ideas but I suspected they served to cover the frats in mystery.

In the past decade they had been thrown open to the middle masses and were turning into hot beds of debauchery with the main training done in beer drinking, free love and rock music. The word on the grapevine was that the latest twists were barbiturates and pornography. They had become known as the underground river.

Most of the kids were in it for kicks, cheap thrills now that good causes were passe. They played the games fast and loose, like they owned the bat and balls. But they were dead wrong. Once you got on the pills and porn merry-go-round, you never got off. Those that tried ended up dead, like Johnny Rich.

The kid had that same "I'm twenty-two and know it all" attitude. She was clever alright but still green and itching to learn the hard way. I wondered if she'd belonged to a sorority.

The name Phi Delta Gamma fit like a glove. The seething masses were itching for Asian women. You could see it in their eyes. I was sure the monster was being fed by the Suzie Wong style reruns on television. I even suspected the War in Vietnam was a covert attempt at colonizing Asian women on a grand scale. Drugs and women had been woven into the war, and this case.

We turned at the end of the fence and looked for the back gate. The lane behind the house was jammed with steaming hot rods. We froze at the gate.

"What's wrong Stan?" a young chippy's voice whispered.

"Nothin" Lucy, just give me a sec..." it was the voice of some pimply faced kid who still sounded like Dennis Day.

"We've been here thirty minutes. I'm cold and wet... and you said you were hot stuff."

I slammed my hand over the kid's mouth to keep her from giving us away. We were too close to throw it all away on a couple of bird brains in the bush. A streak of pain shot up my arm as her teeth dug into my palm. I muffled my scream and stood stalk still.

"What was that Stan?"

"Aw nothin'... probably another couple."

"This place gives me the creeps... I'm getting back to the house."

"Hey Lucy, don't go yet... I'm just getting hard!"

"Hard luck Stanley," the girl's voice faded into the dark.

"Shit! First it starts raining, then I can't get it up and now she walks out on me... goddamn it, somebody give me a break!" the guy squeaked, pulling on his pants and stumbling after the chick.

I stared down at my hand which glowed like a neon sign.

"You got ten seconds," I fumed.

"Reflex action, from my training in self defense. Someone puts a hand on your mouth, you bite first and ask questions later. Sorry about that."

"Next time I'll use my .45," I hissed.

We crept toward the mansion, zeroing in on an open window on the right side.

"I'm going in here... you stay put and keep an eye on the traffic."

"Nuts, I could waltz in the door and be taken for another fish in the pond. I probably even know

some people in there."

"That's a hell of a reference."

"I could just snoop around and say I was partying."

"You stay here or we're finished."

"So we're partners now?" she beamed.

I swore and climbed onto the ledge just below the window. As I paused there two voices filled the room. From the sound of it there were two guys in a john.

"Don't sweat it Billy Boy... who's gonna notice a few Asian chicks among the hordes of babes trucked through this joint. Look, you need the bread and we want the broads. There are big guns running this operation. You wouldn't want to have that baby face messed up would you?" the slithering voice oozed menace.

"If this place gets busted I'll be wiped out. I'll lose my chance at the Phi Beta Gamma national presidency," a high pitched squeal pleaded.

"No way for that Billy Boy... Now I'm gonna wash my hands, walk out the door and pick up another bird... just like we agreed. And we're gonna keep on doin' that until we decide to stop... that clear baby face?"

"Sure Brad... I was just worried," the thin voice cracked and retreated.

I peered through the window and saw the back of the second one out the door. Lights flashed in my head screaming big ears and blonde hair. I crawled through the window after them and popped my head out into the corridor. It was clear so I slipped on my shades and tip toed down the hall to the staircase. I figured they were holding the girl in an upstairs room and started in that direction.

Reviews

SOME MEN SWALLOW, BUT FUMANCHU

Another bitter pill to ingest has been foisted upon Asian Canadians. New, improved, and appearing right now at your local theatres, we have yet another resurrection of that most inscrutably evil, all-time Oriental bad-guy heavy, Dr. Fu Manchu, in *The Fiendish Plot of Dr. Fu Manchu*.

This time, the relentlessly diabolical Oriental arch-villain is again played to the hilt in the usual insulting "yellow-face" make-up. Actor Peter Sellers comes complete with the customary rapier-like fingernails, matching pasted-on mustache and goatee, and of course, the mandatory gobs of hideous epicanthic eye putty. In the hallowed Hollywood tradition, the eye make-up is all that is really required to instantly transform any Occidental into your typical leering Oriental criminal mastermind.

Mr. Sellers, who also specializes in horrendous stereotypical portrayals of East Indians, is the scion of a distinguished "family tradition" that can be directly traced back to British horror veterans Boris Karloff and Christopher Lee, who were his predecessors in the role.

Unsatiated by merely playing Dr. Fu, Sellers does double duty, being also cast in the part of Fu Manchu's arch-nemesis, described aptly in the movie as "the world's greatest living authority on Chink crime", Inspector Nayland-Smith.

The so-called "fiendish plot" of the movie unfolds as the supposedly innately unscrupulous 168-year old Dr. Fu (there's no Fu like an old Fu) attempts to clandestinely concoct up a magical fountain of youth elixir. It is to be slow brewed from a veritable plethora of exotic ingredients, and frothing to the brim with such delectable offerings as the collected Crown Jewels of England.

Somehow, despite all the bungling lobotomized antics of his blundering dacoit hatchet men (who, in the time-honoured code of Hollywood casting, are portrayed by real Asians in order to provide some of that "authentic Oriental backdrop" behind the main white protagonists) the insidious Dr. Fu kidnaps the Queen of England herself. She is smuggled into Fu's secret headquarters, conveniently hidden behind the rather innocuous facade of a local neighbourhood Chinese restaurant, which comes complete with a Buddha on the wall whose eyes shift from side to side. After all, who knows what Machiavellian intrigue takes place behind Chinatown doors? Of course, our villain is inevitably foiled again, when it turns out that "her royal personage" is none other than an imposter, masqueraded by an undercover policewoman.

The scenario turns increasingly ugly, as the debauched Dr. Fu seeks to vent his so called "unspeakable Oriental lust" upon the rather pulchritudinous charms of his lady captive. This climaxes

ConFVcius say:
"If 168 year old man make love to girl of 24 years someone gonna die!"
FV says:
"Well, she has to go sometime."
Peter Sellers in the fiendish plot of dr. Fu Manchu
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in one of the most disgustingly obnoxious scenes in the entire movie. As he degenerates completely, the lecherous Dr. Fu lapses into revolting paroxysms of heavy breathing while the camera catches him furtively spying on the hapless white maiden as she undresses.

And as if this scene were not enough, the audience is further treated to the sickening spectacle of Dr. Fu desperately clutching onto an obviously Freudian policeman's truncheon, all the while agonizingly moaning and groaning, till at last we are mercifully relieved when he finally swoons off into orgasmic release.

Yes folks, we have again been proverbially "kicked in our collective balls". The age-old myth of supposed white sexual superiority is trying to reassert itself. This time, it puts down Asian men as ineffectual, impotent would-be rapists (à la Fu Manchu) who must resort to abduction, and ultimately to masturbation in their futile efforts to attain the "real thing". The "real thing" of course, is defined here as the glorified, objectified great white female, the ultimate sexist status symbol of the white man's power. Naturally, it is assumed that she is the most desirable possible woman.

So much, then for the movie industry's totally perverted version of our sexuality, an outrageous white-chauvinistic sexist-racist fabrication which does not coincide at all with the very potent reality of how Asia arrived at her teeming populations.

Everything considered, "*Fiendish*' is one uncompromisingly bad motion picture. Were it not so blatantly racist, the movie would indeed be tearfully boring. The entire script is laced with atrocious deliberate racial slurs against all people of Asian origin. These slurs include the usual run of the mill cliches such as the scene in which Sellers can't tell his henchmen apart because "they all look alike" (haven't we all heard that one before).

Even as a straight comedy, the movie falls flat on its purulent face, judging by audience response, i.e. the amount of laughter generated. Sellers is not funny at all. His pathetic mock-slapstick attempts at spastic contortions while being zapped under electrodes (while admittedly his finest moments in the entire film) serve only to showcase Peter Sellers as the dull nagging source of intermittent irritation that he has truly become.

For Asian Canadians, the real fiendishness in the movie that we must contend with is the picture's adverse effects on the impressionable young people who have seen it. What will this movie, and others like it, do to distort their views and attitudes towards Asian minorities in Canada?

It is quite probable that some white Canadians do not know any Asian Canadians on a personal basis. Totally fictitious, one-dimensional stereotypical caricatures such as Dr. Fu and his equally villainous cohorts, such as Dr. No and Odd-Job from James Bond films, and Wo Fat from "Hawaii Five-O" (to name a few) may in fact constitute the closest examples of Asians that they may encounter in their day to day experiences. The implications are chilling, given the extremely negative fashion in which Asians are depicted in the media. It is no wonder that there exist negative stereotypes of Asians. For example, note the recent waves of racist fears about the "boat people" somehow "taking over" our country.

Fu Manchu movies threaten the social, cultural and moral goals of this nation. They are potential vehicles for inciting, reinforcing and spreading racial hatred against Canadians of Asian extraction.

As members of our respective Asian Canadian communities, we should do our utmost to work together and collectively combat this type of deadly racism that passes itself off as entertainment in our public movie theatres and living rooms. Motion pictures such as "*Fiendish*" and the new, as yet to be released "*Charlie Chan and the Curse of the Dragon Lady*" (gee Pop, don't tell me that you're going to come back and haunt us again), serve only to line the already bulging pockets of the movie industry.

Wherever and whenever movies such as these are shown, we will find the poisonous seeds of racial misunderstanding and paranoia being sown. If we do not act now, we may indeed be faced with a very grim harvest.

CTV's "Campus Giveaway" has taught us that we can never fully trust the white-controlled media to ever present us accurately or fairly. Asian Canadians must develop our own counter-media resources so that we ourselves can politically define who we are and what our destiny will be within the social context of a multi-racial and future truly multi-cultural Canada.

- Sean Gunn

another point of view

I went to see *The Fiendish Plot of Fu Manchu* expecting to be appalled. The movie poster I had seen promised a heavy dose of Chinaman stereoptypes with Peter Sellers, eyes taped and nails polished, framed by a spider's web. The movie in fact delivers all the stereoptypes in the book. The Chinese characters (not all of whom are played by actual Chinese) are inscrutable, sly and emotionless. There are references to restaurants, laundries and Kung Fu. Though strangely enough it is this obvious portrayal of racist ideas that makes *The Fiendish Plot of Fu Manchu* different from other movies, and a little more tolerable. When Cyd Caesar as an American investigator first refers to "the Chinks" some members of my Toronto audience gasped. By being so blatant these Stereotypes are somehow rendered less insidious though perhaps not inoffensive.

Everyone in *The Fiendish Plot of Dr. Fu Manchu* is a cardboard cliche. Something the movie's defenders liberally flaunt. The British are nepotistic, dotty tea-addicts, Italian Americans are loud and uncouth and women are mindless vessels who would sell their souls at a hint of flattery. But portraying stereotypes equally doesn't produce equality. No one has ever prevented the British from voting because they were dotty and nepotistic. States have prevented women from voting because of their "mental weakness" though. The Chinese weren't allowed to vote in Canada until 1947.

The aging Fu Man Chu is after a yellow diamond to complete the elixir vitae which will rejuvenate him. The gem is stored in the tower of London and Fu plots a diabolical caper to steal it. His six, barefooted henchmen, variously called Wanton, Chowmein, etc. carry out his scheme. Neither Fu nor his henchmen are like any Chinese that anyone will ever meet. By creating such broad characters it seems the screenwriters inend less to support racist stereotypes than to parody Hong Kong's Shaw Brothers, Kung Fu movies or England's pantomime tradition.

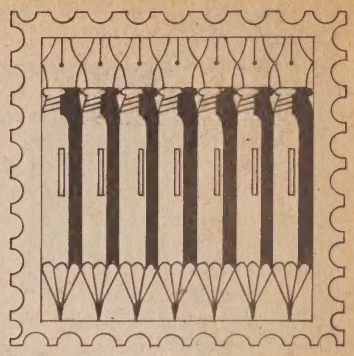
Interestingly enough, when I saw *The Fiendish Plot of Dr. Fu Manchu* no one was rolling in the aisle. The movie just wasn't very funny, and that not because of bad taste. The North American school of comedy relies far more on the credible and the mundane than the zany English style. Perhaps the brand of humour is just alien to us. Even so, in the character of Nayland Smith, former Scotland Yard officer and Fu's opponent, Sellers seemed more interested in creating a piece of character acting, rather than making people laugh. Like *Being There* Fu Manchu has a rather morbid preoccupation with death. This might intrigue Sellers fans, being his last movie, but it certainly doesn't make for good comedy.

Yet in spite of all its shortcomings *The Fiendish Plot of Dr. Fu Manchu* is very watchable. It has lots of characters, guady sets, adequate photograhy and lots of plot. The opening sequence is a stunning rendering of martial acrobatic exercises: the six bare chested henchmen in silky, gold trousers against solid black. The ending, on the other hand, is a clumsy addendum with the revitalized Fu doing an Elvis Presley number.

The night after I saw *The Fiendish Plot of Dr. Fu Manchu* four young women shouted mock Chinese words at me. There is obviously no causal connection between the film and the incident. However, those women in the subway reminded me that we can never swallow racism no matter how palatable it might seem.

-Richard Fung

Letters



Dear Editor,

John Glenn's letter (Vol. 3, No. 1, 1980) on the article "Filipinos in Quebec" (Vol. 2, No. 4 Spring 1980) did not clarify what he calls the "defense movement" in North America. His letter also showed his lack of understanding of the national democratic struggle in the Philippines and the support movement as a whole in the United States and Canada.

First of all, our reference to the "three known groups" was to support groups in Quebec specifically Montreal and not in the whole of North America. We are familiar with the aims of the Movement for Free Philippines (MFP) and Friends of the Filipino People (FFP) and the other support groups not mentioned by Glenn. But in Quebec, as of now, there are two active groups and both support the national democratic struggle in the Philippines. Glenn can find out for himself.

Glenn attempts to link the activities of NDF (National Democratic Front) supporters to the activities of the Marcos embassies "in discouraging people from participating in anti-matial law actions" in that, as he says, the "ND programme makes it even more difficult to mobilize because of these unnecessary implications of a political nature." What these "implications of a political nature" are the reader must attribute to what Glenn says earlier in his letter that the ND programme is also the programme of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the New People's Army (NPA). This is Glenn's way of baiting.

This attempt at denigration and red-baiting falls flat because today the NDF as a broad coalition of progressive sectors and classes represented in the member organizations -- including the CPP, the Christians for National Liberation (CNL), the Alliance of Filipino Workers, Association of Urban Poor, Nationalist Youth -- and the NPA (basically a peasant army) are successfully mobilizing the Filipino people in the cities and countryside and making steady progress in both non-violent and armed resistance to the U. S. - Marcos dictatorship. Glenn only had to read issues of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (e.g. June 13, 1980 issue) and *McLean's* (July 18, 1980) to know about the gains made by the national democratic movement.

NDF support in North America are making progress in their work through careful organizational efforts and by encouraging everyone in all levels of resistance -- be it anti-Marcos, anti-fascist, or anti-imperialist; they realize they have to work within a broad united front of forces with varying persuasions and interests against the U. S. - Marcos dictatorship. Ultimately the response of Filipinos in North America will be determined by the success of the people's struggle led by the NDF; and there are grounds for optimism.

Glenn's "historical and theoretical objections" to the NDF programme are based on misinformation and his political orientation. For example, the NDF's call for coalition government could not have led (as Glenn claims) "Filipino radical nationalists" into supporting Marcos in the 1965 presidential elections. The Ten Point Programme of the NDF was only spelled out in 1973 and reaffirmed in 1977. Glenn also cannot see that the national democratic movement is basically an alliance of the working and peasant classes (who constitute a very large majority of the population) whose allies are the conscious petit-bourgeoisie and many elements of the national bourgeosie whose interests are threatened by the multinational corporations and depredations of the bureaucrat capitalists headed by Marcos and his cronies and friends. That the Filipino business class as a whole is behind Marcos, as Glenn says, is highly questionable. Glenn only has to look at those who support the MFP.

Glenn says that martial law in 1972 was final proof of the "inadequacies and failure of the political aspects of the ND programme." On the contrary, Marcos' declaration of martial law is an indication of the correctness of the line followed by the burgeoning national democratic movement whose leadership pointed out as early as 1970 the possibility of fascism and warned the people to prepare for it. This is one reason why the NDF is so far the largest and most effective resistance group -- with their forces and the NPA operating in 40 provinces (including 4,000 barrios in 300 towns). Marital law is actually a sign of the weakening of a semicolonial state that can no longer solve its problem in a peaceful or non-coercive manner.

Glenn's solution ("socialist government of workers and farmers") is reflective of a Trotskyist orientation -- which has historically failed to analze the concrete conditions and classes of given societies undergoing upheaval. It is premature to talk of socialism as the immediate answer to the problems of Philippine society. The present success of the national democratic movement is due to its programme which is being accepted gradually but steadily by the people. A semicolonial and semi-feudal country like the Philippines should first resolve its principal problems brought about by the U.S. imperialism, domestic feudalism, and bureaucrat capitalism.....

The organization of an"open, non-sectarian, and largely Filipino anti-martial law movement in North America" is of course in the agenda at this time. But this cannot be accomplished through sniping at support groups through publications including a pro-Marcos community newspaper in Toronto.

E. Ordonez & E. Sayo

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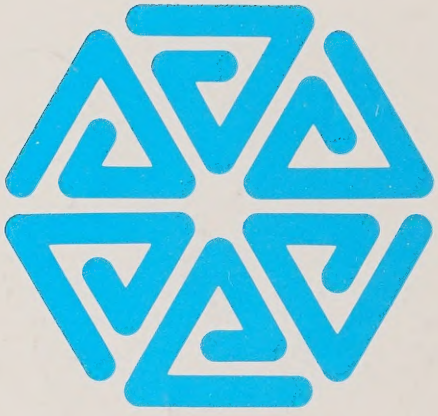

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